

BOWER HILL NEWS

FROM LIGHT TO DARKNESS

FEBRUARY 2008

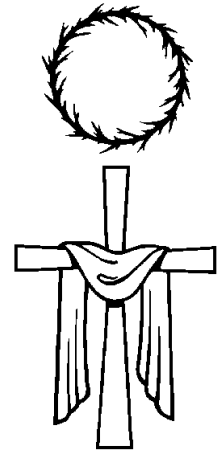
It seems odd to hasten from the light shining in the darkness to the darkness of ashes; to rush from the light of the star to the darkness of contemplation. It seems odd to hurry from the wooden manger to the wooden cross and to jump with haste from the celebration of Christmas to meditation of Lent, but the calendar this year thrusts us into Lent exactly one month after our Epiphany Feast! Like one of my favorite poets, Ann Weems, records in her book, *Kneeling in Jerusalem*, I find myself filled with mixed emotions as I dash from Christmas to Lent. And yet as she writes in her poem, *Looking Toward Jerusalem*, "If I stay in Bethlehem, I stay alone. God has gone on toward Jerusalem." And so with little say in the matter, we are rushed into the dark. As a child, I hated the dark! If I was alone at night, the house was almost certainly ablaze with lights. A nightlight was my constant companion in the silence of the dark, chasing away the shadowy figures that lurked in the gloom.

Lent is a time that is filled with haunting shadows, as we are ever aware that a looming cross and a world covered in darkness are an imminent part of our Lenten journey. In spite of my early experiences resisting darkness, I have found a healing peace in the quiet of evening darkness. Years ago, I began to embrace the darkness of Lent. In this darkness, there is a blessed quiet, so different from the ringing of carol songs and frantic shoppers. This Lenten darkness beckons us to listen to the shadowy whispers of lives transformed along the journey to the cross. This Lenten darkness invites us along the path, if we dare to take it, of a deeper spiritual journey. As we go, we will find in the darkening stillness, a summons to delve deeply into the mystery of the sacrificial love of our Savior. The Lenten darkness holds the promise of solitude and silence and dedicated time to draw near in prayer as we seek the comfort and peace found only in the grace-filled arms of our God. This Lenten darkness that waits is not a darkness to hide in, nor is it a darkness from which to run. For in this darkness, we are known and welcomed and invited to travel with God on a transformational journey of faith.

As a community of faith, we will be exploring this darkness in our worship on Ash Wednesday and in the weeks that follow with our Taize on Tuesday worship services. Just as we have celebrated the light, so now we are challenged to dwell in the dark for a time as individuals and as a community of faith.

In the days ahead, let us explore the mystery and holiness found in the darkness as we journey with God toward the cross.

REV. LAURIE



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2008 STEWARDSHIP REPORT

Good News — 2008: 118 pledges totaling \$318,304.00.

Bad News — 2007: 129 pledges totaling \$334,481 (reduction of eleven pledges totaling \$16,177.00).

Good News – 2008: Six new pledges totaling \$5,060.00.

Bad News – 2008: Lost five pledges due to death, disaffection and moves totaling \$8,000.00.

Good News – 2008: 55 pledges were increased for a total of \$17,500.

Bad news – 2008: 13 pledges were decreased for a total of \$12,000.00

Good News – 2008: 9 of the pledges that were not renewed promised contributions.

Bad News: We will have less money for ministry and mission in 2008 than in 2007.



Good news: In 2007, \$11,000.00 was transferred into savings.

The result is that in 2008 our expenses are automatically \$11,000.00 less.

This covers a lot of the reduction in income.

COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS...COME JOIN IN!



Are you a scrapbooker who might enjoy the chance to work alongside some others? Have you always been interested in seeing what this scrapbooking is all about, but didn't know where to start? On Saturday, Feb. 23rd there will be an informal chance to get together with others to scrapbook in the Lounge beginning at 9:00 a.m. Bring your albums and supplies and stay as little or long as you are able. Perhaps you can pick up a few creative ideas. For sure it will be more fun than working alone. And if you just want to drop in and check it out, feel free to do so. Any questions, call Betsy Hohlfelder at 412-341-1029.

BOWER HILL BOOKWORMS

Come join the women's book club at Bower Hill Community Church!

Bookworms meets on the second Tuesday of each month in a different member's home for a rousing book discussion and time of fellowship. Newcomers are always welcome!

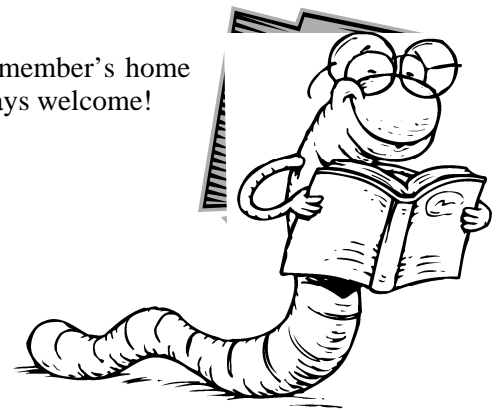
February:

Ireland by Frank Delaney

Host: Nancy Green

March:

Thousand Splendid Suns by Khaled Hosseini



THANK YOU, BOWER HILL !

FROM THE MISSION COMMITTEE



As always, our congregation has again supported those in need. All of the items for the troops in Iraq that were collected through the "Angel Tree" donations this Christmas have been delivered to the Mt Lebanon resident who does the mailing for numerous groups. She indicated that we had a large selection of many good items that she knew the troops would enjoy and appreciate.

Thanks again for your generosity!

SWEATER DRIVE SUCESS

More than 3,000 sweaters have been collected in the first year of the "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood Sweater Drive," coordinated by the Presbyterian Media Mission in part in memory of the late Rev, Fred Rogers.

Bower Hill's own contributions of sweaters and coats were gratefully accepted by SHIM. Over 200 articles were collected thanks to your generosity.

Great job, Bower Hill!



MISSION OPPORTUNITIES... HOW CAN YOU HELP?

SWEET SUNDAY AT WASHINGTON CITY MISSION



Washington City Mission is holding it's biggest fund raiser of the year, the 4th Annual Sweet Sunday Dessert Festival, on February 10, 2008 from 1-6PM. The event is at the Hilton Garden Inn at Southpointe. Volunteers are needed between the hours of 7 AM – 7 PM in shifts. Volunteer shifts are as follows:

- assist with morning setup,
- early to mid-afternoon serving,
- late afternoon to evening serving/clean-up.

There are sign-up sheets in the Narthex, or you can call 724.222.8530

or email: thogan@citymission.org.

If you are unable to volunteer, consider attending! Tickets are \$3 pre-sale (available at the WCM Admin Building and McMurray Dairy Bar) or \$4 at the door. Children under 3 are free. Event runs from 1-6pm.



FOOD BANK COLLECTION

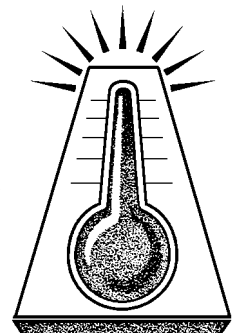


Food Banks all over our community are reporting desperate needs for food. Shelves are low on supplies and major cuts are being made to assistance programs. On Sunday, February 10th we will have our regular collection for the Wallace Food Pantry. Please give generously to help those in need. The food pantry is in particular need of baby food, diapers and paper products (such as tissues, paper towels, napkins, etc.).

HELP OTHERS KEEP WARM THIS WINTER

Did you ever notice the little box on your electricity bill to donate to the Dollar Energy program? I always assumed that this was just an opportunity for the electric company to collect more money, but recently, Jim Guffey the Interim Director of SHIM told me that this is a wonderful way to help people. SHIM is one of the agencies that screens for the Dollar Energy program and he says the funds really help those in danger of having their utilities shut off. I can't imagine what it would be like to go through the winter without heat! Jim also shared that the program usually runs out of money every year because it is funded by donations. Jim asked that we spread the word and let people know about this very urgent need, all it takes is a check mark and a few dollars to keep the program going and to keep people warm this winter. As we continue to count our blessings, let us spread the word and help others keep warm!

REV. LAURIE



DON'T GO TO CHURCH...MAT REPORT



As an update, Mission Action Team #2 is gaining steam coming off the very successful first experiment with the special September 9 worship service. Through the congregation's enthusiastic participation in this service, it is very evident that Bower Hill has a strong call towards mission. Our team is excited to convey that we are in the early planning stages to ultimately kick off a 5-week church wide campaign called "Faith in Action" as our second experiment.

"Faith in Action" is an organized campaign with some amazing success stories that was created through a partnership among World Vision, Zondervan and Outreach, Inc. to help congregations create an outward focus and heart to serve. "Faith in Action" offers wonderful resource materials, ideas and planning tools that foster and promote outreach. It culminates in a Sunday where regular worship services are cancelled and the entire congregation engages in service projects in, and with, the community. On this Sunday instead of "going" to church, we go out and "be" the church.

We believe that one way to encourage community members to give Bower Hill a try is to invite them to work alongside of us during one of our mission projects. What a combination! "Faith in Action" will begin right after Easter with the Service Project Sunday being on April 20th. We will keep you updated, so please stay tuned. We are counting on your participation.

UPDATE FROM HEKIMA PLACE

Please keep Kate, Hekima Place and Kenya in your prayers. See the board outside of the office for more information.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all Hekima Place Supporters, We came home – Purity, Jane, and I to say that to all of you and to bring Kenyan gifts to our supporting churches....but instead you blessed us again and over and over. An embarrassment of riches again, from our God, most wondrous, and from you, our faithful friends.

The Angel Trees at St. Thomas More, St. Louise and Bower Hill Community Churches were so generous and warmed our hearts. The students at Mt. Lebanon High School asked wonderful questions of the girls – questions about school, food and life in general in Kenya. The homes we visited for lunches and dinners and the meet and greets at the churches were warm with hospitality. The home of our Board Member, Janet Hauge hosted a wonderful fund raiser with silent auction Steeler memorabilia sent by a new friend in New York. Even two Big Sisters flew in from Kennebunk to meet the girls and I and send packages back to their Little Sisters. It was breathtaking – the spirit of love and generosity exhibited by one and all concerned.

We returned on Dec. 18, 19th with eight suitcases full of clothing and other goodies. All we can say is THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU.

With love and great thanks,
Kate, the Staff, and all the Scholars of Hekima Place

SHIM REMEMBERS DIANE LEESON

An excerpt from SHIM's Fall Newsletter:

Earlier this year, SHIM and the Bower Hill Community Church lost a wonderful friend, Diane Leeson. After years of battling cancer, Diane succumbed to the disease.

Upon her passing, fellow Parishioners from BHCC desired to honor Diane's memory. Since Diane loved children, the group chose to provide a makeover of the Prospect Park Family Center. Betsy Hohlfelder, one of the project leaders, stated "Diane had a huge heart and love for her children. Everyone supported this project to honor her because they had been touched by her. The project was fun and fitting as it combined Diane's love of children with her support of SHIM. Diane inspired us and continues to inspire people in the church."



ADULT EDUCATION IN FEBRUARY

Feb. 3 - Derek Weston from The Pittsburgh Project

The Pittsburgh Project is a nonprofit community development organization with a 22-year track record of developing leaders and serving the city's most vulnerable residents. They operate a progressive series of after school programs for urban young people, deploy over 2500 people annually to perform free home repairs for Pittsburgh's in-need elderly homeowners, outfit college students for urban service and leadership, and spearhead economic development and anti-violence efforts in our Pittsburgh neighborhood



Adult Education

Feb. 10 - Why are churches leaving the Pittsburgh Presbytery?

Rev. Dr. Douglas Portz, Acting Pastor to Presbytery and head of Presbytery staff will discuss the issues surrounding the desire of two churches to leave Presbytery, including our neighbor, Beverly Heights

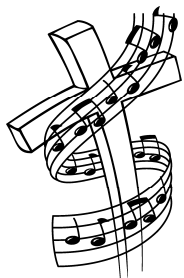
Feb. 17 - Mayview State Hospital

A discussion of the history of the facility and the planned changes in care of the mentally ill from large institutions to community settings - TBA

Feb. 24 - Comprehensive Plan for Community Care for Mayview Patients

Mary Fleming, CEO, Allegheny Health Choices and Mary Jo Dickson, Administrator of the Bureau of Adult Mental Health Services, Allegheny County Office of Behavioral Health

MUSIC NOTES BY JESSICA BAIER



We have transitioned quickly from the joyous birth of Christ—now we wait during most of February for the anticipated resurrection. During the season of Lent, we prepare with fasting, repentance, and prayer as we journey with Christ throughout the 40 days of Lent. We look ahead to the cross, seeing visions of Jesus tortured and hanging upon the awful tree. We feel the darkness of our sins, and yet Jesus only has words of forgiveness. In the hymn “O Sacred Head, Now Wounded,” the anonymous author writes: “What language shall I borrow to thank Thee, dearest friend, for this Thy dying sorrow, Thy pity without end?” The language of humanity has no words strong enough to bear the burden, deep enough to bear the emotion. We turn to music. We turn also to the promise that the Holy Spirit translates for us the prayers that are from our hearts, but beyond our words (Terry York).

“Silence, more than ever, becomes part of the music that is our borrowed language. When the music has finished its attempt to be our borrowed language, only silence remains; the purest of all languages.” ~Terry York

The ensembles at Bower Hill are praying for the Holy Spirit to strengthen us, so that we might be able to express our love and sorrow through the music we share.

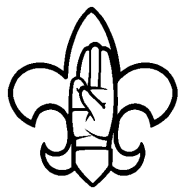
The Handbell Choir is not only preparing for Lent and Easter, but also for the North Hills Handbell Festival, which will take place on April 26, 2008. More information about this concert will be given the March newsletter.

I would like to thank all of the people who gave up their time to do special music for the Advent and Christmas season: Ben Hohlfelder, Jean Miewald, Wendy Mazzini, Carly Lunoe, Emily Stack, George Vosburgh, Lynne Wohleber, Margaret Zabo, Aaron Jones, Rick Jacobs, Brian Hayes, and the members of the Chancel Choir, Handbell Choir, and the King's Kids Clappers.

I truly appreciate your willingness to give up your time to serve this community by sharing your musical gifts.

Handbell Choir Thursdays at 6.30pm

Chancel Choir Thursdays at 7.45pm



A SCOUT IS REVERENT...

Scout Sunday is February 3rd. Please join us in Worship as we welcome Bower Hill's own chartered Scouts from Pack 28 (Cub Scouts) and Troop 28 (Boy Scouts). All participants of youth Scouting programs, both girls and boys, are invited to attend in uniform.

Correction:

Scott Olinger was incorrectly identified in January's newsletter. Scott is an Eagle Scout who, for his qualifying project, completely replanted and redesigned the garden area near the lower parking lot by the portico entrance. The Building and Grounds Committee would like to extend a warm thank you to Scott for his service. Scott will be recognized on Scout Sunday.



During Lent, there will be many opportunities to worship including special services on Ash Wednesday, February 6, Maundy Thursday, March 20, and Good Friday, March 21. Beginning on Tuesday February 12, we will hold Taize on Tuesdays at 7:00 pm in the Chapel, until Tuesday March 11, for those who wish to pray and meditate. In addition to worship and private devotion, we encourage everyone to once again consider all those in need as we support the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering. On the back of your church calendar, we have printed the sharing calendar to help in your efforts and fish banks will be available in the Narthex throughout the month of February. Come and join the journey.



EASTER LILIES

Name _____

Phone _____

Number of plants @ \$10 each _____

Please use a separate order form for each dedication:

In memory of _____

In honor of _____



Caption describing picture or graphic.

Please return to the Church Office, or drop in the Sunday Collection Plate by **Sunday, March 9, 2007.**

CARE LIST

- Margie and Roll Beatty, 1300 Bower Hill Rd. Pittsburgh, PA 15243
- Betty Chidlow 1300 Bower Hill Road, Apt. 185 Pittsburgh, PA 15243
- Matt Dunfee, 966 Worthington Woods Blvd, Worthington, OH, 43085
- Kenn Fetterman, 2236 Kingridge Rd, Pittsburgh, PA 15237
- 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
- Peggy Craig, 714 Bower Hill Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15243
- Catheryn Deemer, Broadmore Assisted Living #205, 3275 Washington Pike, Bridgeville, PA 15017
- Harry Dunfee, 1648 Sillview Drive, 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
- Harry Retzer, 493 Castle Shannon Boulevard, #520, Pittsburgh, PA 15234
- Tooie Sharkey, Asbury Heights, 700 Bower Hill Rd, #7338, Pittsburgh, PA 15243

WORSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP VOLUNTEERS FOR FEBRUARY

USHERS

Jim Corbett, Lucille Heckman, Woody Hughes,
Earl Kennedy, Bill Ramsey

COMMUNION SERVERS FOR FEBRUARY

Alan Hohlfelder, Betsy Hohlfelder, Donna Williams, Carol Knox,
Graham Knox, Jane Kohman, Dave Green, Nancy Green

Choir: Gordon Mitchell, Phyllis Yohe

GREETERS FOR FEBRUARY

9:00 AM Service

- February 3: Pete and Elaine Dalmaso
- February 10: Chuck and Janis Shaw
- February 17: Jamie Sonnie
- February 24: Ray and Christine Henney

10:30 AM Service

- February 3: Cantalupo, Carter, Criswell
- February 10: Theresa Child, Delestienne, Eisenbeis
- February 17: Ewing, Foltz, Freas
- February 24: Fenton, Good, Gissin

LECTORS

10:00 a.m. Service:

- February 3: Scout Sunday
- February 6: Joan Bridges
- February 13: George Freas
- February 20: Bill Cadwell
- February 24: Michael Waine



OUR CHURCH STAFF

Jessica Baier, Director of Music Ministries

je@bhccml.com

Michael Bergen, Custodian

Brian Hayes, Director of Youth Ministries

br@bhccml.com

Dianne Scott, Financial Secretary

di@bhccml.com

Rev Laurie Sponaugle, Co-Pastor

la@bhccml.com

Rev Leonard Sponaugle, Co-Pastor

le@bhccml.com

Emily Kerr, Secretary

em@bhccml.com

THE CHURCH OFFICE

[412] 561-4114

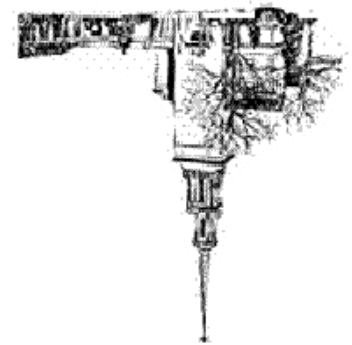
Monday - Friday 9:15am—3:15 pm



Campbell.

“My whole family’s giving up something for Lent. Mom’s giving up cookies, Dad’s giving up cake, and I’m giving up squash.”

BOVER HILL COMMUNITY CHURCH
A PLACE TO BELIEVE, BELONG & BECOME



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