

BOWER HILL NEWS

Dear Friends,

If anyone were to peruse my most precious possessions, he or she would come upon a collection of *beautiful crosses*. The very moment I set that phrase to paper, however, I realize that of all the oxymora I have ever recited in rhetoric, this is the most intrinsically incongruous. To whatever degree we would romanticize the cross, there is nothing whatsoever *beautiful* about the *cross*. It is such an ugly, horrific instrument of torture that one wonders how God could employ it in his ultimate act of salvation. I suppose C.S. Lewis' classic comment imbues some meaning into our *Heilsgeschichte*—our salvation story: "God uses all the wrong roads to bring us to the right places." God used the Via Dolorosa—the road to the cross—to bring us to the glorious place of salvation.

Emil Brunner, Christian theologian of the twentieth century, agrees that the death of God's Son on the cross is an absolute "must" in God's scheme of things. It is an historical necessity since the human situation of sin and guilt in relation to God is dangerous, sinister, and disastrous; and only God can accomplish his reconciling work in our encounter with God. It is only because the cross "must be," that what seems to be an unintelligible tragedy becomes a significant saving act... in point of fact, the reality that "it could not be otherwise" demonstrates that the death on the Cross was no accident, no thwarting of the divine plan of salvation, no frustration of divine government of the world, but, on the contrary, was itself an integral part of the divine saving history. "Therefore, Christ *had* to suffer"—the whole liberating truth is based upon this "must"... Paul's statement that He (Jesus the Christ) "was obedient unto death, even death on a cross" can be considered the shortest and most effective summary of the whole life of Jesus. His crucifixion was "the must" to which he was obedient. [\[i\]](#)

We - who find our society's present predilection for violence repugnant - want to ask whether God's salvation couldn't have been attained otherwise than through the bitter cross?

Dorothy Sayers in effect posed the same question:

*Hard it is, very hard,
To travel up the slow and stony road
To Calvary, to redeem mankind; far better
To make but one resplendent miracle,
Lean through the cloud, lift the right hand of power
And with a sudden lightning smite the world perfect.
Yet this was not God's way, Who had the power,
But set it by, choosing the cross, the thorn,
The sorrowful wounds. Something there is, perhaps,
That power destroys in passing, something supreme,
To whose great value in the eyes of God
That cross, that thorn, and those five wounds bear witness. [\[ii\]](#)*

What is this *something supreme* that the divine gesture of power would destroy rather than elicit? It's faith, faith and obedience together. The right hand of power would surely evoke our fear and awe; but only the cross can kindle faith, and only faith as a response to Christ's sacrificial love can inspire homage.

*I did not know the meaning of Cross:
I counted it but bitterness and loss:
Till in Thy gracious discipline of pain
I found the loss I dreaded purest gain...
Yea, in the Cross I saw Thine open face,
And found therein the fullness of Thy grace. [\[iii\]](#)*

God's saving act is complete only when you and I believe and when, at the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow.

Faithfully yours,
Calvin Coolidge Wilson, Interim Pastor

[i] See Emil Brunner, *Dogmatics*, Vol. II, *The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption: The Saving Work of God in Jesus Christ*, pp. 281-305.

[ii] Dorothy L. Sayers, *The Choice of the Cross*, from *The Devil to Pay*

[iii] George Wallace Briggs, *Knowledge Through Suffering*, from stanzas 2 and 3

MARCH 2010

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COMMUNITY NOTES

FOODBANK STILL NEEDS YOU!



FOOD DRIVE

On Sunday, **Sunday March 14**, we will have our regular collection for the Wallace Food Pantry. This is a critical time of the year for food banks and pantries. High-protein foods like peanut butter and tuna, baby items of all types (diapers, formula, food), and whole grain cereals and oatmeal are always deeply appreciated.

BOOKWORMS

Bookworms meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the home of a member, for fellowship and discussion of a chosen title.



Because the February meeting was cancelled due to the weather, we will discuss both the February and March books at our March meeting. It will be held on March 16 at 7:30 p.m. at Nina Helbling's home. The February book was "Boomsday" by Christopher Buckley and the March book is "Have a Little Faith" by Mitch Albom.

Join us for a stimulating discussion and fellowship!

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP CONTINUES WED. MORNINGS

Senior men's breakfast meets every first Wednesday of the month at 8:00 a.m. at King's Restaurant on Rte. 50, Washington Pike near the end of Greentree Road, in Scott. We had eight men gathering in February.



There is no agenda other than good fellowship and interesting conversation. No invitation or reservation is needed. We meet in the room to the left of the cashier. Questions? Call Dave Green at 412-531-2205.

PNC UPDATE

The unusual snowy weather has had an effect on everyone including the Pastor Nominating committee. A personal interview with a very viable candidate had to be postponed because of weather conditions and hopefully will be rescheduled quickly.



In the meantime the committee continues to review pastor information forms and listen to sermons on CD's.

As always your prayers are appreciated.

SANCTUARY ENTRANCE FOR CHURCH SERVICE

We have deliberately not removed the snow from the walkway to the main entrance to the Sanctuary. During the winter months, there is a tremendous heat loss when the double doors are open prior to the Sunday Service and also the

inside double doors are open leading into the Sanctuary. We will keep the walkways open to Fellowship Hall, where our members can come into the Church, knock the snow off their shoes and hang up their coats and proceed to the Service. Thanks in advance for your cooperation and understanding.

F. Lynn Foltz

PARKING LOT UPDATES

Severe winter weather created some parking challenges in February. Here are some updates on BHCC's plans for dealing with snow:

- **THE PARKING LOT NEXT TO HOSPICE**

These parking spaces can be used during our Sunday morning worship Service. The walkways to the Fellowship Hall entrance will be maintained.

- **HANDICAP PARKING REMINDER**

All spaces outside the Kitchen entrance are for our handicapped members who need this area for parking during Sunday mornings. Only one space is available for non-handicap parking.

- **PORTICO ENTRANCE LOT**

On Monday, February 22, an additional two rows of spaces were plowed in this parking lot. This lot was maintained at a minimum capacity during the week to save on plowing expenses; but due to increased need on Sundays, the plowing schedule will be increased to match demand.

- **WHAT A GREAT PROBLEM TO HAVE!**

- **MOFFETT STREET PARKING**

Additional parking is available on Moffett Street in front of the Church.



MUSIC NOTES BY JESSICA BAIER

The Chancel Choir will provide special music for the Good Friday Evening Service on April 2, 7:00 p.m., in the form of a cantata entitled "*Tenebrae: A Service of Darkness*." This cantata, written by Hal H. Hopson, will feature both contemporary and traditional selections. Several readings accompanied by the extinguishing of candles brings this service to a meditative conclusion shrouded in darkness.

The "service of darkness," or Tenebrae (Latin for "darkness"), dates back to the 4th century, according to some sources. Traditionally observed during Holy Week, it focuses on the final hours of Jesus' life and crucifixion.

For shadows to exist, there must be light. In the case of the Passion story of our Lord, that light, as the gospel of John tells us, "was the light of all people." (John 1:4). *Tenebrae: A Service of Darkness*, walks us through the final hours of Jesus' life including His crucifixion. But as John affirms,

**"The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness did not overcome it."
(John 1:5)**

In its original form, the cross was a tool of execution, or death. But in the eyes of faith, it symbolizes victory and life eternal! In a day when the powers of evil threaten to destroy our optimism for a brighter tomorrow, the cross stands as a reminder that love is stronger than hate, and that hope prevails in times of despair. Standing in the shadow of the cross, we find comfort and courage in knowing that we can live in a future that is ultimately of God's making! (Lloyd Larson)

***Beneath the cross of Jesus I fain would take my stand,
The shadow of a mighty Rock within a weary land...
I take, O cross, thy shadow for my abiding place...
~Elizabeth C. Clephane***

In addition to the Chancel Choir preparing for all the music that goes into Lent, Holy Week, and Easter, the Handbell Choir is preparing for the North Hills Handbell Festival. This will take place May 1, 2010, at Marshall Middle School (part of North Allegheny School District). There will be a public concert at 5:00 p.m.



**Thank you for all the prayers, cards,
meals and phone calls during Paul's
illness and his passing to be with his
Lord and Savior. Your thoughtfulness
was greatly appreciated.**

The Frock Family

YOUTH NEWS FROM DAN GETKIN



Could we have had a stranger February than the one we just experienced? It was the kind of month that takes all of your plans and runs them through a paper shredder. Usually, that's not a good

thing. However, despite the snow and the mess it caused, February turned out to be a great month for our youth group! We finally made it downtown to try out the ice rink at PPG Plaza (I didn't even fall once!), enjoyed brunch together, and continued our engaging discussions during education hour. Perhaps the best event of all, though, was the result of a cancellation. We spent a day distributing material into our community to collect food for Souper Bowl Sunday, and when the blizzard forced us to cancel our pickup time, we expected to not collect any food for South Hills Interfaith Ministries. Our congregation responded in wonderful fashion, bringing their own donations with hardly any prompting. Such a gesture is a fantastic reminder that this church supports us and will find ways to lift us up through any hardship. From the bottom of our hearts, thank you and God bless you.

WORSHIP INFORMATION FOR MARCH

Our sermon series for the five Sundays in Lent continues in March.

Titled *CROSS PURPOSES*, the sermons recognize that from the very beginning of his ministry Jesus was at cross purposes with cultural distortions of his day as well as with religious leaders who oppressed the people with stringent religious rituals and banal practices. A second nuance of this phrase is that there were specific purposes of his cross on Golgotha and that his crucifixion fulfilled a divine plan on our behalf.

Sunday, March 7

Third Sunday in Lent

Holy Communion

Luke 13:1-9

CROSS PURPOSES: Redeeming Blood

The Rev. Calvin C. Wilson, preaching

Sunday, March 14

Fourth Sunday in Lent

Luke 15:11-31

CROSS PURPOSES:

For Even the Righteous

Daniel T. Getkin, preaching

Fifth Sunday in Lent

John 12:1-8

CROSS PURPOSES: House of the Dead

The Rev. Calvin C. Wilson, preaching

Sunday, March 28

Passion/Palm Sunday

Luke 19:28-40

Dismantled on a Donkey

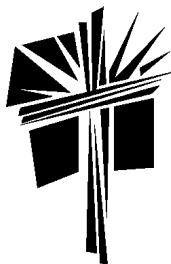
The Rev. Calvin C. Wilson, preaching

Sunday, March 21

ADULT EDUCATION PRESENTS LENTEN SERIES

The Cross at the Center of the World. Implications of the Cross for Multicultural Societies

Our six-week Lenten series led by The Rev. Grafton Eliason and scholar Christopher Berg continues in March. "The Disparity of Wealth and Poverty" and "The Ravaging Impact of Disease" were presented in February. The subjects in March are:



March 7: The Misconception of Euro-centric Supremacy

March 14: The Aftermath of Imperialism/the Rise of Islam

March 21: The Wandering Masses: Refugees

March 28: The Triumph of Peace

Due to the snow emergency, adult education was cancelled on February 7th. The adult education committee will try to reschedule Rabbi Mark Mahler's talk on the Jewish social justice ethic as given in the creation story. Our speaker for February 14th, Neighborhood Academy Head The Rev. Thomas Johnson, was unable to be present. The committee is working to reschedule him also.

Adult education sessions are held in the church library at 10:45 a.m. each Sunday unless otherwise announced. Dave Green is chair of the adult education committee. Phone: 412-531-2205

Email davegreenpgh@aol.com.



LOOKING AHEAD TO THE CROSS AND RESURRECTION

Maundy Thursday, April 1

Agape Feast and Communion
in Fellowship Hall at 6:30 p.m.

The Swinging Pendulum

Calvin C. Wilson, preaching

Good Friday, April 2

Ecumenical Good Friday Service

Noon to 3:00 p.m.

Mt. Lebanon United Methodist Church

Tenebrae: A Service of Darkness, April 2

Good Friday Cantata

Featuring the Chancel Choir
in the Sanctuary at 7:00 p.m.

Easter, Sunday, April 4

Resurrection of the Lord

Luke 24:1-12

An Idle Tale

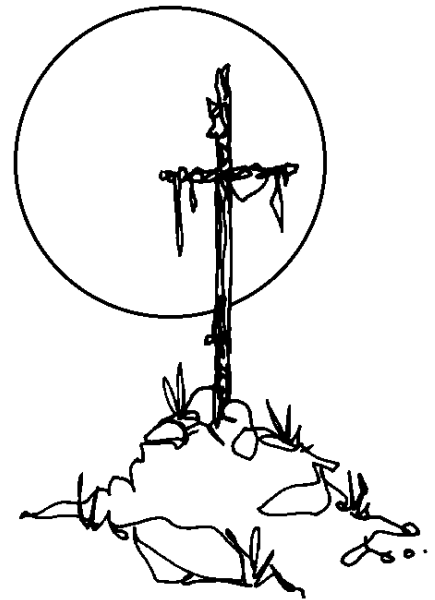
The Rev. Calvin C. Wilson, preaching



LENTEN VESPER SERIES

Overheard: Conversations by the Cross Wednesday Evenings at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary

What if it were possible to overhear conversations of people who were involved in our Lord's Passion during the week of his arrest, trial, and crucifixion: even right then while the events were happening? Such a speculation calls upon our imagination to speculate what they would be saying. During four Wednesdays in March, we shall listen in on the verbal exchanges of eight characters of the Passion Narratives. The scenes will take place in a Jerusalem Café. In addition to the two people we overheard in February (Jason Rising as Malchus and David Hicks as Mark), the characters will be presented by our own members from the congregation.



March 3

Barabbas and Caiaphas

Barabbas, the criminal released when Jesus was condemned, encounters Caiaphas, the high priest who led the cries for his release. Featuring Richard Jacobs and Charles Laufer

March 10

Pontius Pilate and Procula

The Roman Procurator who rules in Jerusalem engages his wife in an intense discussion about this man Jesus, whom Pilate condemns to death. Featuring David Green and Cynthia Gissin

March 17

Simon of Cyrene and the Centurion

Simon of Cyrene, who was conscripted to carry Jesus' cross, confronts the Centurion who compelled him to carry it. Featuring Richard Westerhoff and Lynn Foltz

March 24

Mary and John

Mary, Jesus' grieving mother, and John, the "beloved disciple," who took her into his home, reflect with each other on the crucifixion. Featuring Darendia Lease and Daniel Getkin

WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS FOR MARCH

COMMUNION SERVERS

Christine Henney, Eleanora Freas,
George Freas, LuAnn McNickle
Choir: Jean Miewald, Margaret Zabo

GREETERS

March 7
Marian Brannan,
Lori Schofield, Richard Schofield

March 14

Cindy Waller, Mary Good, Dave Stewart

March 21

Bill Cadwell, Carolyn Westerhoff, Dick Westerhoff

March 28/Palm Sunday

Todd Westerhoff, Christie Westerhoff, Donna Williams

USHERS

Steve and Debbie Boisvert,

Bob Bridges, Chuck and Mary Laufer, Bob Winnett

LECTORS

March 7
Bill Cadwell

March 14
Keith Mason

March 21
DJ Geis

March 28/Palm Sunday

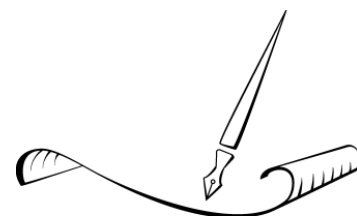
Kirsten Bruder

SOUND BOARD OPERATORS

Glenn Child, Bill Andrews
Evan Schardt, Dylan Lease, George Freas

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE SESSION MEETING OF JANUARY 25, 2009:

- The 2009 year-end financial statement and the 2010 church budget were approved by Session. The budget will be presented at the congregation meeting on February 28.
- The resignation of Todd Westerhoff from Session, due to his current work schedule, was accepted with regret. Dick Westerhoff was nominated to fill the unexpired term at the February 28 congregation meeting.
- Session reaffirmed that the church motto is "Bower Hill Community Church: Growing together in faith, reason, service and love."
- A program of Lenten Vespers entitled "Characters Around the Cross: A View from the Pew" will be presented in the Chapel on Wednesdays at 7:00 PM from February 24 through March 24.



Clerk's Comments

Bill Cadwell, Clerk of Session

POSITION DESCRIPTIONS FOR THE OFFICES OF
BOWER HILL COMMUNITY CHURCH

TITLE OF THE POSITION: The Office of Elder

The purpose of an Elder as set forth in "The Book of Order" of The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) is... "together with ministers of the Word, they exercise leadership, government, and discipline and have responsibilities for the life of a particular church as well as the church-at-large, including ecumenical relationships. They shall serve faithfully as members of the Session."
"The Book of Order" also assigns specific responsibilities to Elders serving on the Session which include individually and jointly strengthening and nurturing the faith and life of the congregation, teaching, motivating, guiding and encouraging the congregation for their task within the church and their mission in the world, actively participating in all activities in the life of the church, i.e. worship, education, fellowship, etc, visiting, comforting and caring for the people, with special attention to the poor, the sick, the lonely and the oppressed, informing the pastors, appropriate committee area, or support staff of persons who may need special attention, serving communion when assigned and maintaining the confidentiality of Session meetings.

TITLE OF THE POSITION: The Office of Deacon

The focus of the Board of Deacons is to reach out to church members by parish zone, cultivating new relationships, exploring member's needs and supporting them however possible. Individually, each deacon has been in touch with those in their zone by way of a visit, a phone call and/or cards. Deacons have provided meals for church members and made many home, hospital and phone visits.

TITLE OF THE POSITION: The Nominating Committee

This committee is responsible for organizing the search and presentation of nominations for election for any open Session and Deacon positions as a result of end of term or resignation. At the end of the Church year, the committee also presents nominations for the congregation representation positions on the Nominating Committee. The two Session members on this committee also are responsible for attending the Presbytery meetings. This committee is a good opportunity for fellowship and to be involved in the direction of selecting the congregation leadership.

After giving thought to the above position descriptions,

I would like to suggest _____ for the office of:

(circle all that apply):

Elder Deacon Nominating Committee

Please return this form to the church office

NOMINATION FORMS

As you participate in the life of our church, please consider that individual, including yourself, that would contribute and provide energy and support while serving as an Elder, Deacon or member of the Nominating Committee.

The insert to the left describes the positions and responsibilities. Your nomination(s) can be submitted on this form to the church office. As Chair of this year's Nominating Committee, I am available to answer any questions or listen to any suggestions. Thank you very much.

Tim Lease



EASTER LILIES OFFERED

Bower Hill will once again offer the congregation the opportunity to purchase an Easter Lily to be displayed on Easter Sunday in memory or in honor of loved ones. Plants are \$12.50, deadline for ordering is March 28th. Make checks payable to BHCC with LILY in the memo.

Name _____ Number of Plants _____

In Honor of _____

In Memory Of _____

Check # _____ Cash _____

**Attach additional sheets as needed*

BOWER HILL COMMUNITY CHURCH

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

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www.bhccml.com



OUR CHURCH STAFF

The Rev. Calvin C. Wilson, Interim Pastor
ca@bhccml.com

The Rev. Grafton Eliason, Company of Pastors

The Rev. John Yohe, Company of Pastors

Jessica Baier, Director of Music Ministries
je@bhccml.com

Dan Getkin, Youth Director
da@bhccml.com

Dianne Scott, Financial Secretary
di@bhccml.com

Emily Kerr, Secretary
em@bhccml.com

Michael Bergen, Custodian

THE CHURCH OFFICE

[412] 561-4114

Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m.— 2:30 p.m.

**Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
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RETURN SERVICE
REQUESTED

CARE LIST

Margie Beatty, 1300 Bower Hill Rd., Pittsburgh, PA 15243

Matt Dunfee, 966 Worthington Woods Blvd, Worthington, OH, 43085

Kenn Fetterman, 2236 Kingridge Rd, Pittsburgh, PA 15237

Peggy Craig, 714 Bower Hill Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15243

Catheryn Deemer, Kane Hospital

Tooie Sharkey, Asbury Heights, 700 Bower Hill Rd, #7338, Pittsburgh, PA 15243

Evelyn Mason, Health center at Friendship Village, 1290 Boyce Road, Upper St. Clair 15241

Barbara Prunchak, c/o Crestwood Commons, 100 Crestwood Court #223, Wheatfield, NY
14304

Truman Kohman, 1300 Bower Hill Road, Apt. #1430, Pittsburgh, PA 15243

Mike Bergen, 227 Gilkeson Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15228