

~RECONSIDERING PRAYER~

“Later, the judge said to himself, ‘Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice so that she will not wear me out by continually coming’.” ~Luke 18:4

Members and Friends,

Have you ever called your senator or representative? Until recently, I never had. A part of me believed that an email would be just as effective, since a telephone call to a politician’s office would surely just go to voicemail. Honestly, another part of me was simply scared to place a telephone call to a politician. What if I *didn’t* get an answering machine? What if a real person actually *did* pick up? Would I speak calmly and rationally about issues that keep me awake at night? Or would my voice go all squeaky? Would I end up prattling inarticulately? Worse, what if the operator actually *did* patch me through to the elected official? What then?

I recently placed my very first phone call to my senator’s office in Harrisburg, and it rang about six times. “This is curious,” I thought, “most answering machines pick up on the second ring.” That’s when my fears were realized. A living, breathing person answered the phone (although I’d called at 8:45 a.m.). She seemed as surprised as I was to hear a human voice. But she connected me with another early-bird office employee who took notes on my concerns, collected my contact information, and promised to pass my message along to the senator.

Now, the politician in question has a long tradition of supporting things I oppose. It’s a tradition that I suspect he will maintain. But there was something strangely empowering in the knowledge that I had done what I could. In some far-flung corner of that green-domed capitol in Harrisburg, maybe in some clerk’s cramped office beneath a back staircase, a minor official had heard my voice and recorded my concerns. I have no idea what the senator will do with my input, or whether he will ever see it, but I have submitted it. Much like a prayer.

Anyone who remembers Jack Brannan will know that he—unlike me—had no qualms about picking up the telephone to voice his concerns. At his funeral, one year ago, I mentioned that he used to call the church office every Monday in order to express his views on political, social, and religious issues of the day. (Early in my time at Bower Hill, Jack informed me that he approved of everything I said, and he would let me know otherwise if he changed his mind—which I have no doubt he would have done!) Jack knew very well that the church secretary and I could do nothing to end the war in Iraq or prevent cuts to public transportation. And yet, he “phoned-in” his worries because, as he once said, “To me, these are issues of faith, and Bower Hill is my community of faith.” In other words, his weekly telephone call to the church office was nothing less...than a prayer. It was an expression of hopes and fears.

After the funeral service, I was approached by Deborah Acklin, president and CEO of our local public television station, WQED. She said, “Jack only called you once a week? He called me every day!” Saturdays and Sundays included, Jack would call to give his two cents on the previous day’s programming. In April 2011, Ms. Acklin devoted her WQED newsletter article entirely to Jack, whom she had never met in person, but with whom she had spoken almost daily.

This is the way of hopes, and wishes, and dreams, and—yes—even fears. Sometimes we just need to put them out there, to speak them aloud to anyone who might be listening. At times we just need to give them voice. And when we do, is it really anything other than prayer? Of course, prayer is more than asking for things; it’s often just resting in the presence of the Sacred. But in the days ahead, I invite you to think about the ways that you pray. How do you voice your hopes and fears for the world...and to whom? Even if you’re not a pray-er in the traditional sense, I’m sure that you pray. And the world is made better by your prayers.

~Brian

COMMUNITY NOTES

Want to be included on this page? Submissions are due the 15th of every month for the next month's publication. 412-561-4114 or office@bhccml.com

FOODBANK STILL NEEDS YOU!



On Sunday, February 12, we will have our regular collection for the Wallace Food Pantry. High-protein foods like peanut butter and tuna, baby items of all types (diapers, formula, food), are always deeply appreciated. The food bank specifically requests boxed or bagged rice this month.

SENIOR MEN'S GROUP: FIRST WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH

Senior men's breakfast will meet on Wednesday, February 1. The group convenes at 8 a.m. at Kings Restaurant on Rte. 50, Washington Pike, near the end of Greentree Road, in Scott. The meeting day will continue to be the first Wednesday of each month until April. We normally have eight to twelve men attend. 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.

END OF LIFE CHOICES BOOKLET

A limited supply of "Hard Choices for Loving People," a brochure concerning medical choices for life threatening illness, is available in the office and, if any remain, at the February 12 adult discussion meeting. This was the subject discussed by Dr. Elizabeth Chaitin who spoke on the subject at the January 15 adult discussion program.

PAPER RECYCLING BIN AT BHCC

A paper recycling bin has been placed in our north parking lot. This is a project of our Cub Scout Pack 28, who will promote the bin in our area and share any proceeds from the recycled paper with the church. Please bring your recyclable newspapers, magazines, mail and office papers to our own recycling bin. See the last page of this newsletter for more information from the recycling company.

BOOKWORMS

Bookworms is our ladies' book discussion group. It meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the Friendship Room at BHCC, for fellowship and discussion of a chosen title. Look to the bulletin for information on upcoming hostesses. Come and join a lively discussion. February's book is *The Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet* by Jamie Ford.



FEBRUARY 25:
SKIING AND SNOW TUBING

Bower Hill is going skiing!

Or tubing....or snowboarding.....or swimming, or skating, or bowling, or whatever else you might find to do once you get there.

We're off to Seven Springs on February 25th. If you are an expert skier or have never gone before, if you hate the snow or can't get enough of it, you are invited to enjoy the day with us.

Group rates are as follows:

- All day Ski Lift Ticket.....\$45 per person
- Equipment Rental.....\$20 for skis, poles, and boots
-\$32 for snowboards and boots
- Tubing.....\$25 for 2 hours for adults
-\$20 for 2 hours for kids 4-11
- Snow-School.....\$22 per person for 1 hour class
- Indoor pool.....\$8.00 per person
- Mini-golf.....\$6.00 per person per game
- Bowling.....\$7.50 per person per game
- Roller Skating.....\$7.50 per person
- Spa Services.....See the Seven Springs website

In order to get these substantially discounted prices, we need to reserve ahead as a group. Therefore, please sign up in the narthex if you plan to join the fun.

SAVE THE DATES

- March 11:** All Church Bowling
- March 17:** Haiti Fundraiser and Tea
- April 8:** Easter Breakfast
- April 22:** Youth Spaghetti Dinner
- May 5:** Cinco D'Mayo Party
- June 9:** Scavenger Hunt!

COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Communication Committee has been continuing to get the word out about our church. We have advertised in the Mt. Lebanon magazine six times and a similar amount in the Almanac. We have gotten feedback that the advertisements are being seen. In fact, Brian has had inquiries from people about our church as a result of seeing the ads.

While this is encouraging, we realize the need to keep up the consistency of print advertising and expand into the online world. Many months ago we created a Facebook page as part of our initial step into the world of social media. The committee is beginning to brainstorm and plan a strategy regarding a more comprehensive use of social media such as Facebook, Youtube, online advertising, etc. We realize this is a huge undertaking but feel it is needed to get our message to those who are actively using social media. This will be an evolving strategy but we believe we can make progress by taking gradual steps. The committee will be reaching out to various groups and individual members this year as we begin to implement our plans. We will keep you informed as the implementation details unfold.

We have an immediate need for someone to update our Facebook page with the key events going on in the church and to monitor any comments left by visitors. This activity could be shared by a couple of people. We are looking for volunteers who will check the postings on Bower Hill's page on a frequent basis. If there are comments left to which a response is appropriate, the volunteer will ask the appropriate person, such as committee chair or Brian, to respond. In addition, there will be a limited number of events to be posted each week. The material for the updates will be supplied. If interested, please contact Glenn Child.

Also, for those of you who are Facebook users, we encourage you to visit Bower Hill's page and leave comments about events, sermons or postings. Our hope is that over time, our Facebook page will become a place where good discussion will take place via comments on the postings.

The Communication Committee consists of Jim Burke, Glenn Child, Theresa Child, Cynthia Gissin, Dave Green, Phil Johnson, LuAnn McNickle, Chuck Prine and Brian Snyder. Please feel free to give them any of your suggestions.

There is much work left to be done by the Communication Committee. It's a slow but needed process and we are thankful for everyone's support. While we believe our efforts are helping, don't forget word of mouth still has the most impact getting people to consider joining the church.



**LOOK
WHO WAS
BORN
THIS MONTH**

THE BIRTHDAY BLESSING is changing. Instead of inviting you to the front of the church on the month when your birthday is celebrated, we will list your name in the first worship bulletin of that month and in the monthly newsletter.

Please take a moment to read through the names, pray for them, and offer them your best wishes! If your name is not listed, it is because the church office does not have your information.

<i>February 01</i>	<i>Nancy Geis Gianna Mason Allan Reece Todd Westerhoff</i>
<i>February 03</i>	<i>Jaime Lease</i>
<i>February 08</i>	<i>Susan Hicks</i>
<i>February 09</i>	<i>Betty Eisenbeis Jane Kohman Brian Swed David Swed</i>
<i>February 10</i>	<i>Beth Wilson</i>
<i>February 13</i>	<i>Glenn Williams</i>
<i>February 15</i>	<i>Dennis Geis Sr.</i>
<i>February 16</i>	<i>Jim Kane</i>
<i>February 18</i>	<i>Karl Casey</i>
<i>February 20</i>	<i>Emily Chin Taylor Linaburg</i>
<i>February 21</i>	<i>Steve Mangin</i>
<i>February 22</i>	<i>Evie Harris Jackie Holdsworth LuAnn McNickle Mary Ryfun</i>
<i>February 24</i>	<i>Peggy Craig Scott Olinger</i>
<i>February 27</i>	<i>Norma Grubb Chris May</i>
<i>February 28</i>	<i>RJ Henney</i>

FEBRUARY WORSHIP PLANS

February 5: Fifth Sunday after Epiphany
Holy Communion: Isaiah 40:21-31 and Mark 1:29-39

February 12: Scout Sunday
II Kings 5:1-14 and Mark 1:40-45

February 19: Transfiguration Sunday
II Kings 2:1-12 and Mark 9:2-9, seminary intern and Youth
Director, Chelsea Leitcher, preaching

February 26: First Sunday in Lent
Genesis 9:8-17 and Mark 1:9-15

COMMUNION SERVERS

Woody & Barb Hughes, Betsy Hohlfelder, Joan Bridges,
Sally Child, Glenna Creaves

LECTORS

February 5: Susan Hicks
February 12: Scout Sunday
February 19: Beth Wilson
February 26: Kiri Rising

GREETERS

February 5: Lisa Shwallon, Jen & Mike McDonough
February 12: Patti Hansen, Dave & Connie May
February 19: Betty Ewing, Jim & Joan McAnulty
February 26: Amanda Vosburgh, Mary Beth & Abby Waine

ACOLYTES

February 5: Graceann Foster, Sage Williams
February 12: Ellie Rising, Evie Harris
February 19: Sydney Saba, Lindsay Bruder
February 26: Madelyn Salvante, Todd Westerhoff

**FEBRUARY ADULT EDUCATION
OFFERS US MARINE REHABILITATION,
POLITICAL ETHICS AND PALESTINIAN PLEA.**

The Wounded Marine Warriors Camp is a program the Marine Corps has developed to help its wounded, injured and sick Marines, who are being medically discharged from the Marine Corps, transition from the military to civilian life. Dan Pultz, a team leader for the program, will be at Bower Hill Adult Education on February 5.

A timely subject for this election year is scheduled for February 11, when Dr. Dierdre Hainsworth of the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary will speak on "Ethics in the Political Process." Dr. Hainsworth is Asst. Professor of Ethics and Director of the Center for Business, Religion and Public Life at the Seminary and spoke to Bower Hill Adult Education in 2010 on "The Ethics of Peacemaking."

On February 19, Dr. Ron Stone, retired professor of ethics at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, will explain "The Kairos Palestine Document, . . . a prayerful call of Palestinian Christians to end the occupation." There will be no adult education program on February 26, due to the semi-annual meeting of the congregation.

March programs will feature a Christian viewpoint on the Mormon Faith, the Pittsburgh Interfaith Impact Network and a report from a Methodist missionary in Bethlehem, Palestine.

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.

LENT AT BOWER HILL

"Lent" is the Old English word for spring. It's related to the modern word "lengthen," since it is in late February that daylight hours begin to lengthen noticeably. Lent is a season to meditate on the life and the way of Jesus as he journeyed toward the cross. Special Lenten activities at Bower Hill Church include the following:

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

Feb. 22, 7:00 p.m., in the sanctuary

LENTEN POTLUCK DINNERS AND WORSHIP

Thursdays in the month of March
from 6:30-7:30 p.m., in the Lounge

MAUNDY THURSDAY COMMUNION SERVICE

April 5, 7:00 p.m., in the Fellowship Hall

GOOD FRIDAY COMMUNITY SERVICE

Mt. Lebanon United Methodist, Time TBA

Please watch your weekly bulletin
for details as they develop.

NEW ADULT CLASS: *The Basics of Faith*

This group will meet *every other week* to discuss belief and the life of faith in light of the readings.

Stay tuned for details.

**MUSIC NOTES BY JESSICA BAIER**

je@bhccml.com

Office Hours**Sunday:** 7:00 a.m. -1:00 p.m.**Monday:** 10:00 a.m. -3:00 p.m.**Wednesday:** 10:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
and 4:30 p.m. -9:00 p.m.

It's hard to believe that we start preparation for the season of Lent this month. Ash Wednesday, February 22, begins the 40 days of anticipating the great joy that is Easter. Worship on February 19, Transfiguration Sunday, and throughout Lent will feature a variety of different hymns from our PC(USA) hymnal and a few other hymnals.

On Sunday, February 19, we will sing the hymn, "O Wondrous Sight, O Vision Fair." During Lent, we will also sing this hymn tune to the text of "O Love, How Deep, How Broad, How High." This tune is referred to as "The Agincourt Song" (or by its chorus, *Deo Gracias*). It was written in 15th century England, narrating the 1415 Battle of Agincourt, in which the English army defeated France in what is now the Pas-de-Calais region in France.

On the Sundays in Lent, the congregation will join the Chancel Choir in singing the Call to Prayer, which takes place just before the Pastoral Prayer and the Prayers of the People. Each week we will sing a verse from the familiar hymn, "The Old Rugged Cross." This hymn was written in 1912 by evangelist and songwriter George Bennard, based on Galatians 6:14, which reads:

***But God forbid that I should glory,
save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ,
by whom the world is crucified unto me,
and I unto the world."***

**Youth Director Chelsea Leitcher**

ch@bhccml.com

**Office Hours: MONDAY
11:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.**

The BHCC Youth Group is off to an excellent New Year. We are extremely grateful for everyone at BHCC who supported us in the Christmas Wreath Sale, which helps to fund our summer Mission Trip to Gratiot County, Michigan. In January, we began a new Bible study series focusing on the book of Romans. We continue to volunteer with Produce to People and plan a weekend to go ice skating and snow tubing in February. We continue to thank God for our many blessing and our BHCC family for your continued support.

**COFFEE HOUR SHAKE-UP**

Many of you have received e-mails in the past few weeks about the changes being made to coffee hour. The goal of this change is to spread the responsibility for coffee hour out to as many people as possible, thereby lightening the load. If you have not been contacted to help, it is likely because: 1) you are too new to the church and we wanted to let you get your feet wet before asking; 2) you've been around so long that we feel you have done your fair share of coffee hours for a lifetime; or 3) you are doing so many other things for the church that we didn't want to ask you to take on yet another.

However, if you feel that you would like to participate in some way to share this undertaking, there are two ways you can do this. First, you can talk to Michelle Snyder about getting put on the rotation. The rotation is about every six months because so many people are willing to do their part. And if you are afraid to do it alone, we are glad to pair you up with someone else. Second, for those of you who can't physically do it, you could consider making a donation to offset the cost of a coffee hour. It costs approximately \$25 to host coffee hour and if you would be interested in supplementing that cost, someone else could do the leg work. Both you and your partner would be recognized in the bulletin as "coffee hour hosts".

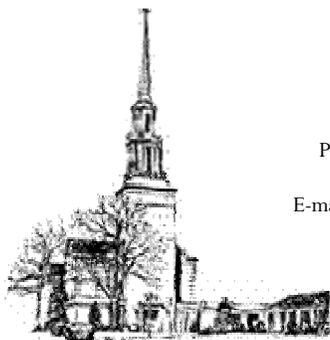
COFFEE HOUR HOSTS IN FEBRUARY

February 5th - Lease Family
February 12 - Harris Family & Cynthia Gissin
February 19 - Kirsten Bruder
February 26 - Robosky Family

BOWER HILL COMMUNITY CHURCH

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

70 Moffett Street
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OUR CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Brian Snyder, Pastor
br@bhccml.com

Company of Pastors
Rev. Grafton Eliason
Rev. Susan Shira Nilsen
Rev. Betty Sykes
Rev. Calvin C. Wilson
Rev. John Yohe

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

Chelsea Leitcher, Youth Director
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Dianne Scott, Financial Secretary
di@bhccml.com

Emily Kerr, Office Administrator
em@bhccml.com

Jim Askins, Custodian

THE CHURCH OFFICE

[412] 561-4114

Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m.— 2:30 p.m.

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR CARE LIST

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

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

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

Ethel La Barbera, 50 Vanadium Road, #130, Bridgeville, PA 15017

Velma Noonan, 50 Vanadium Road, #1119, Bridgeville, PA 15017

Jeanne Olsen, 1001 Ajay Drive, South Park, PA 15129

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

Tooie Sharkey, Asbury Place, 760 Bower Hill Rd, Pittsburgh, PA 15243