

~Let There Be Light~

*“The darkness is passing away,
and the true light is already shining.”*

1 John 2:8b

Dear Members and Friends,

Since joining Bower Hill’s “Haiti Water Team” and attending “solar school” down in Arkansas, I’ve been thinking a lot about electricity. (Just on a side note: solar school is located in Arkansas because it is—fittingly enough—a ministry of the Presbyterian “Synod of the Sun.”) Rich Salvante, Karl Casey, and I went south to learn how to power our Haiti water purification systems by means of solar energy, since there is plenty of sun in that country but not much in the way of an electrical grid. After three days of wiring, and voltage, and amps, it was a thrill to attach our newly constructed “disconnecter boxes” to the solar panels, flip a lever, and watch three light bulbs flicker into life. There’s a breathless moment, just before you throw the switch, when you think to yourself, “please-work-please-work-please-work.” And in our case, that moment was followed by a flood of relief...and a strange kind of joy. Of course, stories about that experience are coming soon to a pulpit near you. But since I’m thinking so much about electrical power, and since it would be beneath my dignity to tell light bulb jokes from the pulpit, I’ll use this page to share a few:

- How many Episcopalians does it take to change a light bulb?
Two: One to call the electrician and one to mix the manhattans.
- How many Lutherans does it take to change a light bulb?
Three: One to change the bulb and two to shake their heads and talk about how much better the old bulb was.
- How many Presbyterians does it take to change a light bulb?
At least twenty-seven: A six-member committee to send the request to Session, an eighteen-member Session to approve the change, a custodian to make the change, and at least two...to form a new denomination in protest.

In the world of humor, light bulb jokes rank only slightly higher than knock-knock jokes. So, let’s rethink the question: How many Presbyterians (or Episcopalians, or Lutherans) does it take to change *a world*? The standard answer is “one.” And it’s true that it only takes one person-of-faith to change the world. But a better answer is “every one of them,” for in another sense we know that the world will only change for the better when each of us throws our lives into casting light in dark places.

I’m proud of the ways that Bower Hill Church invests its human energies into the life of the world. This year “before the snow flies”—as we say upstate—we will have established two safe drinking water sites in a country ravaged by waterborne illness and death. That’s two bulbs flickering to life in a dark place. As a church, we truly are growing brighter and better. Thank you for taking part.

In Christ’s peace,
~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

SAVE THE DATE: UPCOMING EVENTS

Please note the recent changes!



- June 16:** Men's Outing (see below)
- Aug 11:** Washington Wildthings Game
- Aug 25:** Church Picnic
- Sept 9:** Kick-off Breakfast
- Sept 22:** Scavenger Hunt
- October 6 & 7:** Faith In Action (FIA)
- Oct. 13:** Funny Fundraiser — Haiti Comedy Night
- Oct. 26-28:** Women's Retreat: Gilmary Retreat Center

MEN'S OUTING

On Saturday, June 16, men of the church will meet in the North Parking Lot at 8:00 a.m., to carpool to the Forbes State Forest, near Myersdale, where they will hike to the summit of Mount Davis. From the top of Davis (the highest point in Pennsylvania) hikers can see three states. The four-hour hike is rated "easy" in most guidebooks. Hikers can expect to be home around 4pm. Please sign up in the narthex, bring \$5 for gas, a packed lunch, and a lot of drinking water.

SENIOR MEN'S GROUP

Senior men's breakfast will meet on Tuesday, June 5. The group convenes at 8:00 a.m. at Kings Restaurant on Rte. 50, Washington Pike near the end of Greentree Road, in Scott. Continuing through October, the group will meet on first Tuesday of the month. 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.

VOLUNTEERS FOR GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Volunteers for a variety of tasks are still urgently needed for the national meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA), being held in Pittsburgh at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, downtown, from June 30 to July 7. Some 688 commissioners from 171 presbyteries will gather as the church's highest governing body to make decisions on our denomination's programs and policies for the next two years. Several thousand more people will come to Pittsburgh to observe the business of the General Assembly. To learn more about volunteer opportunities, go on line to www.cola2012.org and click on "volunteer." Or, contact Dave Green, our General Assembly volunteer coordinator, for more information at 412 531 2205.

OFFERING OF LETTERS

The Mission Committee invites you to participate in an Offering of Letters on June 3, on behalf of Bread for the World. Information and materials will be provided in order for you to write to our representatives regarding hunger in America and the need for a humane budget process. Bread for the World members write personal letters and emails and meet with our members of Congress. This outpouring of concern sends a powerful message to our political leaders and helps us move closer to our goal of ending hunger. The 2012 Offering of Letters Campaign focuses on creating a circle of protection around programs for hungry and poor people.

YOUTH WORK TRIP VOLUNTEER

We need a male adult volunteer to help chaperon the Youth Work Trip this summer. The dates will include July 8 - July 15 and the group will travel to Gratiot County, Michigan. Anyone interested please contact Chelsea Leitcher

FOODBANK STILL NEEDS YOU!

On Sunday, June 10, 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. Special lunch items like boxed pasta and hearty soups are requested as the food bank prepares for an influx of families whose children will not receive free school lunches during the summer months

THE BABIES ARE COMING!

It seems that there is something in the water in the South Hills for we are anticipating the arrival of two new Bower Hill babies in the late summer/early fall. Grafton (a member of our company of pastors) and Trisha Eliason will welcome their third child in August and some of our newest members, Jason and Beth Robosky, will have their first child in October.

What ever parent knows is that, with the arrival of a new baby comes piles of receiving blankets, onesies, and sleepers....often more than one little person can wear. But what there is never enough of is DIAPERS. For that reason, the Bower Hill family will host a "diaper shower" for each of these families as their due dates approach (Eliasons on July 15; Roboskys on September 16th). A table will be set up during coffee hour on a Sunday morning where you can bring diapers, wipes and well wishes to these families. Watch the bulletin for more details in the near future.

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.

- June 19:** "Maisie Dobbs"
by Jacqueline Winspear
- July 17:** "In the Sanctuary of Outcasts"
by Neil White
- August 21:** "Caleb's Crossing"
by Geraldine Brooks
- September 18:** Special plans — see below
- October 16:** "Thunder Dog"
by Michael Hingson

BOOKWORMS HOSTS AUTHOR IN SEPTEMBER!



At the September 18 meeting of our women's book group, Mary Calland, Mt. Lebanon resident and author of "Consecrated Dust", will join us to discuss the book and her writing experience. "Consecrated Dust", her second book, is historical fiction centered on Pittsburgh during the Civil War. An article in IN Mt. Lebanon points out that "Mary Calland takes historical fact and weaves fictional characters into the fabric of her books, resulting in a very personal account of events that is intriguing even to folks who don't relish history". Come to hear Mary and join in the exchange of ideas.



WE'RE GROWING!
Highlighted here are just two of our new member families! Watch this space for continued information on other new and returning members!

The Mezyk Family



We welcome Mark and Lynn Mezyk and their two children. Anna, 8, is in second grade at Hoover School in Mt. Lebanon, and Gabriel is six and is in Kindergarten. Mark is a civil engineer and Lynn is a at-home parent. The Mezyks like spending time together as a family, outings to fun places and the outdoors and camping. They have been involved in East Liberty Presbyterian Church, but wanted to set down roots in a congregation closer to home.

The Bailey Family



Troy and Emily Bailey live in Upper St. Clair. Troy is a gifted tenor, singing in the Bower Hill choir. He is a credit analyst at Dollar Bank and holds degrees from Clarion, Chatham, and Vassar. Emily is a graduate of Smith and currently completing a Ph.D. in religious studies at Pitt. Both are native to the South Hills.

USHERS WANTED

Openings exist for ushers at BHCC on a regular or on-call basis.

Qualifications:

- * Friendly Face
- * Cheerful Manner
- * Able to lift a collection plate
- * One Sunday every other month or more if willing

Benefits:

- * Gift of Service to BHCC
- * Chance to meet other members
- * Appreciation of Worship and Music Committee

To apply please sign up on the clip board in the narthex.



CHRISTIAN ED: HELP WANTED

Sunday School Teacher

For any Sunday, June-August, organize activities, stories, games, etc. Sign up on the bulletin board outside the church library.

Children's Activity Bag Helper

Replenish paper, activity sheets, etc. in bags for children to use while in church. Continuous position from June-August.

VBS Volunteer

All types needed. Kitchen crew, group leaders, sign makers, greeters and many more. June 18th - 22nd

Call Carolyn Westerhoff to answer this call for help!



JUNE/JULY WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS

COMMUNION SERVERS

June: Kate & Dick Junker, Cynthia Gissin, Donna Williams, Cynthia Gissin, Choir: Phyllis Yohe, Joan Zakor

July: Rick & Pat Jacobs, Anne & Gordon Mitchell

LECTORS

June 3: Josie Sheldon

June 10: Theresa Child

June 17: Chris Robbins

June 24: Shelly Saba

GREETERS

June 3: Jennifer & Bob Foster, Mary Good

June 10: Pete Fenton & Norma Grubb, Bill Cadwell

June 17: Grafton & Trisha Eliason, Dave Stewart

June 24: Glenn & Sally Child, Theresa Child

July 1: Jean Miewald, Lee Ferrero, Chan Ketchum

July 8: Lynne Wohleber, Joan Zakor, Margaret Zabo

July 15: Gordon & Anne Mitchell, Len Heisey

July 22: Jason & Kiri Rising, LuAnn McNickle

July 29: Rev. John & Phyllis Yohe, Sally Child

ACOLYTES

June 3: Evie Harris, Graceann Foster

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS

June 3: Dave & Shelly Saba

June 10: Rick & Pat Jacobs

June 17: Dave & Susan Hicks

June 24: Rev. John & Phyllis Yohe

July 1: Mary Beth Waine

July 8: Anne & Gordon Mitchell

July 15: Josie Sheldon & Joan Bridges

July 22:Carolynn Westerhoff

July 29: Rev. Brian & Michelle Snyder

COMMUNION NEWS: BREAD

For many years communion bread has been baked by various members using a recipe passed down by Doris Fulton a faithful member during the 70's and 80's. The recipe includes butter, flour, sugar and eggs. For several years there has been a request to provide an alternative to this bread for those with intolerance to butter, and recently there has been the need to make the bread gluten free. The Worship and Music Committee is hoping to find one bread that meets all these requirements. "Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread." (I Corinthians 10:17).

Beginning in June we will start testing various products with the hope of finding the one bread that will meet everyone's needs by early Fall.

The committee invites anyone with a gluten & dairy free bread recipe to provide bread in July or August. Please contact Margaret Zabo to let her know you want to participate in this bread testing.

Just as Jesus sat at table with anyone and everyone—and was often criticized for it—we believe that our table should be open and accessible to everyone, and that we should all share "the one bread." It's not really important what kind of bread we end up using, as long as it is edible to everyone. Whatever bread we decide upon, we pray that it will demonstrate our oneness with each other, and with God through Jesus, the bread of life.



As this program year comes to a close, there are a few groups I'd like to thank: The Chancel and Handbell Choirs, the Worship and Music Committee, the Sound Board operators, the Acolytes (and their parents!), and the individual instrumentalists that participate on a regular basis. Thank you all so much for your time and energy spent on using your talent during the Worship services!

We will have a pick-up choir on three Sundays throughout the summer months: June 24, July 22 and August 19. On these days, we will meet in the Sanctuary at 8:45am, learn and practice a piece of music, and sing it as part of the Offertory Anthem. All are welcome!

There are opportunities on a regular basis for different music throughout the Worship Service, even more so during the summer months when the choir isn't singing! If you would like to consider playing an instrument, singing a solo, or singing with a small group, please let me know!

SUMMER WORSHIP PLANS

June 3: Holy Communion

John 3:1-17 & Romans 8:12-17

June 10

Mark 3:20-35 & 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1

June 17

Mark 4:26-34 & 2 Corinthians 5:6-10, 14-17

June 24

Mark 4:35-41 & 2 Corinthians 6:1-13

July 1: Holy Communion

Rev. Jack Hodges officiating

Mark 5:21-43 & 2 Corinthians 8:7-15

July 8

Mark 6:1-13 & 2 Corinthians 12:2-10

July 15

Mark 6:14-29 & Ephesians 1:3-14

July 22

Mark 6:30-34, 53-56 & Ephesians 2:11-22

July 29

John 6:1-21 & Ephesians 3:14-21

VBS: VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Please sign up in the Narthex to volunteer!

This year's Vacation Bible School theme is "Clean Water for All God's Children" and designed to enable children to understand the importance of clean water for health, and to show them ways to share in the mission of taking clean water to all the children of the world.

Children and our volunteers alike will learn the relationships between health and water, how water is purified, and the enormous difference it makes in the lives of the people who have little water, no water and/or contaminated water.

We will need lots of helping hands in many areas including group leadership, opening and closing skits, music, games, crafts and general organization. For more information, please contact Carolyn Westerhoff, Kirsten Bruder or Susan Hicks for details. We're excited and hope that you will be too!

VBS: JUNE 18 - 22, 2012

CALL THE OFFICE TO REGISTER !

\$10 PER/\$20 PER FAMILY

AGES: 3 (POTTY TRAINED) TO 11

THE BIRTHDAY BLESSING

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.



LOOK WHO WAS BORN THIS MONTH

Empty rectangular box for names.

Two vertical lines for names.

Notes from Hekima Place
May 10, 2012

For the past two months, I have been in Kenya working at Hekima Place near the town of Kiserian. The girls who live here were in desperate need when Kate Fletcher offered them a loving home and the education none of them were getting otherwise. Although Hekima Place is an institution, it does not feel like one - it feels like family, albeit a large family that includes 65 girls from age 3 months to mid-twenties! Many came to Hekima years behind in their schooling because they could not afford the required fees, uniforms and supplies. This means some of the secondary school girls are 20+ years old. Many of the girls have some family, generally aunts, grandmothers, older brothers or sisters who can't afford to support them, but with whom they maintain regular contact.

Family life here at Hekima consists of 12 – 16 girls of mixed ages living in a house with a house Mum, who provides love, oversight and family management. The girls have chores; they wash their own clothes and keep their houses tidy. The big girls take care of the little girls, and everyone genuinely loves their sisters. They take lunch and dinner in the main dining hall. Prayer is led by the girls at every meal, and they always pray for their donors and sponsors who make their life at Hekima possible. The food is plain, but nutritious. Most of what they eat is grown in their local garden, or "shamba". Meat is a rare occasion and a real treat. They also love to have cake and ice cream whenever there is a birthday or special occasion. They do school work, chores, and the small girls play. They are quite inventive and can entertain themselves with almost no toys or props. Often you'll hear them singing hymns (the lively ones!) they have learned from Kate or in worship.

Some of their stories break your heart. We have a 9 month old baby, Blessing, whose mother was 14 when she conceived. She did not know she could get pregnant from what she did with her boyfriend and did not understand what was happening to her until they sent her home from school because of the pregnancy. The little mother is now 16 and in 5th grade. She lives with her widowed HIV+ auntie who is trying to care for four of her own and five of her brother's orphaned children. When Blessing arrived here in March, she was 7 months old and weighed 9 pounds. She was so listless she could barely hold her head up. I'm sure her young mother was malnourished herself and couldn't provide milk and the auntie could not afford to buy formula. With two months of good food and the doting attention of all the Hekima mums and big sisters, Blessing is growing fast, getting much stronger, and has quite the cheerful little elfin personality! The little mother and auntie have been here to visit her twice. We hope at the end of the mom's schooling she and Blessing can be reunited.

Kate has been in the US fund raising for the past 5 weeks, so in her absence I have been acting director of Hekima Place. Fortunately for me and the girls, Kate has a dedicated capable staff who have all worked really hard to support me and keep the place going. Still, it has been a challenge. As you might imagine with 68 girls there are frequent crises, from health issues to academic issues to discipline issues. I am in awe of Kate Fletcher for all she has accomplished here and how, at age 73, she manages this place on an ongoing basis. Of course she lives on the compound and that means that she almost never gets a day off unless she actually goes away on retreat for a day or so. Before she went to the US she told me on several occasions she was taking a day off - but then she would spend at least three quarters of her 'day off' driving girls around, doing crisis management or running errands for them. Kate's love and commitment to her 'daughters' is inspiring, to say the least.

The Kenyan school year starts in January and ends in late November. They don't have one long break like the US does in the summer. They have 3 terms per year with approximately one month break in April, August and December in between each term. The primary school the girls attend is nearby and includes preschool through 8th grade. Secondary school is a boarding situation and encompasses grades 9-12. During the school holidays the girls usually spend part of their time here at Hekima, but, if they have family, they spend most of the holiday visiting them. Some are invited to stay with staff or Trustees. Some 12 to 15 of the girls have no one to visit so they stay here. It is during these holiday breaks that Kate returns to the US to raise the money that keeps Hekima Place going and the staff takes their vacations.

The break this April was unusual in that we kept all of the 8th graders, all of the high school seniors, and some of the other secondary school girls (those with poor grades) here for most of the holiday so we could tutor them in math, science, physics and biology. The 8th graders and seniors have major national exams at the end of the year that will determine their educational opportunities in the future so it is critical they score well. Rick and I both tutored as did a staff member who is a former teacher. In addition, we hired two experienced teachers to work with the girls. Having 19 extra girls in residence and adding tutoring to the routine made for an unusually hectic break period for those of us who remained on duty. I sincerely hope the efforts will be reflected their classroom achievements this next term.

During my stay here, I have also relied on the Kenyan Board of Trustees for support. One of the trustees, in particular, has become a good friend. Rebecca Murigich, an education professor, phones regularly to check on how things are going. She has come here to visit me and counsel some of the girls, and even took me for a lovely day of R&R that included a wildlife walk in Nairobi game park, coffee and croissants, and a visit to the largest crafts market in the area. She is also the only person I have met here who is Presbyterian - her husband is a retired Presbyterian pastor. We have had some very interesting conversations about the church in Kenya and the US.

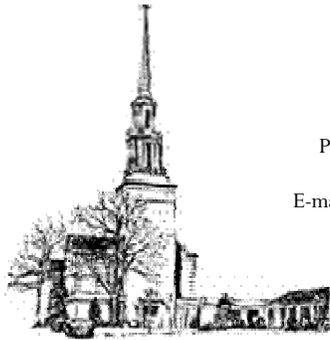
Having the opportunity be in Kenya and to work with these girls for the past two months has enriched my life immeasurably. Despite the inevitable family squabbles, the girls lives are truly joyful and they are thankful for their blessings, meager as they are. We could all take a lesson in abundant living from their example.

I believe our Lord has nourished and grown Bower Hill's relationship with Hekima Place and the mission here over the past few years. I can really see the impact of your gifts and your love on girls who would otherwise be destined for lives of poverty, ignorance and pain. They have so much to give and you are helping to make it possible for them to grow into strong young women who will make a difference. I thank you and the girls thank you so much for your support. God bless you for caring!

BOWER HILL COMMUNITY CHURCH

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

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THE CHURCH OFFICE

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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

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

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

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