

BOWER HILL



Your Introduction to

BOWER HILL COMMUNITY CHURCH

A Congregation of
The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

*Growing together in
faith, reason, service and love*

70 Moffett Street
Mount Lebanon
Pennsylvania 15243
412-561-4114

Web: www.bhccml.com
Email: office@bhccml.com

We invite you to retain this pamphlet.

*Bower Hill Church
is Open to New Ideas
and All People.*



Our pastor, the Reverend Brian Snyder, explained our essence recently: “Bower Hill Church has a unique calling among all the churches of the South Hills. Ours is a socially-conscious faith, oriented toward making *this* world a better place. Ours is an inclusive faith that leaves judgment to God alone, but seeks the well-being of the stranger. Our world stands in ever greater need of the kind of faith we offer—pursuing our vision for Christ’s reign of justice and peace.”

At Bower Hill Church, we preach love, not guilt. We believe that religion ought to be about fulfillment—about the inspiration to live life well. We feel that church should stimulate the mind, not cloud it. We welcome diversity, provide worship that enriches, discussion that illuminates and service opportunities that satisfy. We are a church for thinkers and doers.

A Legacy of Community Service and Social Justice



Bower Hill Community Church was launched in 1950 to provide a new church to a new community. The streets burgeoning with homes off Bower Hill Road were seen as a mission for Pittsburgh Presbytery. Newly ordained minister the Reverend William (Bill) Pierson Barker literally followed moving vans into the new streets in the Cedarhurst development and asked young families to become part of the congregation he was forming.

Many agreed, and chose a patch of ground at the northwest corner of Bower Hill Road and Parkview as its location. A U.S. Army surplus prefabricated building was erected and Bower Hill Community Church began.

The congregation soon outgrew both the building and the property, and built a new sanctuary at the present site of the church's Fellowship Hall on Moffett Street. Membership continued to grow, and the cornerstone of the present sanctuary was laid in 1960.

By the mid-1960s, the civil rights movement was challenging the nation's conscience and demanding change in racial assumptions in its cities and suburbs. Bower Hill Church's pastoral leadership called on the congregation to oppose bigotry and racism. Our senior pastor, Bill Barker, marched with The Reverend Martin Luther King in Selma, Alabama in 1965.

Numerous members of Bower Hill Church joined others in the South Hills to end practices that excluded African Americans from living in our community and discouraged minority ethnic and religious groups from buying houses in certain neighborhoods. Working through an organization they helped create, the South Hills Association for Racial Equality (SHARE), they successfully lobbied community leaders to adopt civic programs that ended housing exclusion.

In the years since, Bower Hill Church has actively supported members and programs favoring fairness, equality and social justice in the communities the church serves, as well as the greater Pittsburgh region.

Worship and Fellowship

Sunday worship in the sanctuary begins at 9:30 A.M. and ends at about 10:30 throughout most of the year. Worship times may change on major church events such as Christmas, Easter, and other dates that are scheduled and announced in advance.

Pastor Brian Snyder normally preaches, although other staff members or guest speakers occasionally occupy the pulpit.

Our Chancel Choir is mainly volunteers with some professional augmentation. We also have a volunteer hand bell choir that performs frequently in worship. Our Director of Music Ministries Jessica M. Baier directs both choirs and serves as organist. Our church organ is a 35-rank Moeller pipe instrument purchased in the 1980s from the Bellefield Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh's Oakland section when its building was demolished. We added a four-manual O'Neal and David Associates console with electronic control early in the 21st century. The original organ in our sanctuary was an electronic instrument.

Immediately following worship, we have a fellowship time with coffee and other refreshments in Fellowship Hall, a short distance from the sanctuary. You are welcome to join us.

Child care for infants to age three is available on Sundays from 9:15 a.m. until 11:45 a.m. in our nursery near the sanctuary. Ask an usher for directions.

Christian Education

Church school classes are held each Sunday for children from pre-school through fifth grade. The children's Sunday experience normally begins with a children's message with the pastor early in the 9:30 A.M. worship. They then go to their age-appropriate classrooms where they are taught by volunteer teachers.

Adults have two options for education on Sunday mornings: an adult class that presents programs on contemporary society and theology and a small discussion group that explores faith topics and spiritual development. Both groups meet from 10:45 A.M. to 11:45 A.M. on Sunday mornings in locations close to the sanctuary. **Child care is available.**

Vacation Bible School – This one-week program in June is open to all community children entering kindergarten through grade six.

Youth Program

For church and community youth from middle school through high school, Bower Hill Church has a program typically directed by a seminary student. The young people gather after Sunday worship for snacks, fellowship and discussion. Other programs of interest to teens are scheduled throughout the school year. Summer usually involves an out-of-town mission work trip under the direction of our seminary youth director.

Other Fellowship Activities

A women's discussion group called **Koinonia** meets weekly on Wednesdays from 9 to 10:30 A.M. in the lounge on the ground floor of the church September through May to study the Bible and enjoy each other's fellowship.

Senior Men meet monthly at 8 A.M. for breakfast at Kings Restaurant on Washington Pike across from the end of Green Tree Road in Scott. November through April the gathering is on the first Wednesday of the month. May through October it is on the first Tuesday of the month.

Bookworms is a group of women from our church who meet on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:30 P.M. in the Friendship Room at the church. Books for discussion are selected by the members of the group.

Hooks and Needles – If you knit, crochet, needlepoint (or anything related) or want to learn how, you are welcome on the first and third Saturdays of every month at 10 A.M. in the church lounge, ground floor.

Mission Activities

Want to become part of a mission service program? Bower Hill Church has numerous opportunities. While our church financially supports mission programs locally, nationally and abroad, many of our members are directly involved in mission activity. They would welcome your interest. Here are a few of these programs:

Haiti Clean Water Project – Our people are building solar water purification stations in rural Haiti.

Produce for People – We join members of other churches and the North Side community to distribute fresh produce and other foods to families and individuals at risk.

Miryam's House – Every Sunday Bower Hill “greengrocers” pick up surplus produce at Giant Eagle at South Hills Village and deliver it to a women’s shelter near downtown.

Family Promise – A network of churches in the South Hills provides housing for homeless families. Monthly we provide dinner and fellowship at a host church.

South Hills Interfaith Ministries (SHIM) – Volunteers provide various services to this community organization.

Note: A complete list of mission activities open to volunteers is on the church web site.

Community Resources at Bower Hill Church

Sponsored Organizations:

Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts – Two Boy Scouts of America units are sponsored by Bower Hill Church. Boy Scout Troop 28 meets most Tuesday evenings in our Fellowship Hall and has an extensive outdoor camping program.

Cub Scout Pack 28 meets at various times on most weeks during evenings.

Call the church office for details on how to contact the Boy Scout and Cub Scout units.

Bower Hill Brailleists has a service center on the ground floor of the church where it provides books and educational materials for the visually impaired.

Other Community Organizations Meeting at Bower Hill Church

Girl Scouts and Brownies – Call the church for details on how to contact the Girl Scouts and Brownies organizations.

The Compassionate Friends – This national and international organization provides self-help support for bereaved parents, siblings and grandparents. It meets monthly in various rooms in the church. Check the church office for details.

DART Program – Bower Hill Church provides facilities for the Allegheny Intermediate Unit DART (Discovery, Assessment, Referral and Tracking) program that provides early intervention services for eligible young children, ages 3 through 5. Children served by the program are selected by the organization.

Alcohol Recovery: Mayfair on Moffett – This Alcoholics Anonymous affiliate meets weekly on Wednesdays at 6 P.M. in the church lounge on the ground level.

Note: Please check the church office during business hours to confirm times and locations of meetings of community groups.

Caring for Our Members

Our Board of Deacons is responsible for the compassionate ministry of the church. Members in need of special assistance, such as meals after illness, are served by the deacons.

Our Church Government

Like all Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregations, Bower Hill Community Church is governed by a church council called the “session” consisting of 18 laypersons known as elders elected by the congregation. The pastor serves as the moderator or presiding officer of the session. Our church is represented at the regional governing council known as the Pittsburgh Presbytery. The national church is governed by its General Assembly of 688 elected commissioners from the 173 regional presbyteries in the United States. At all levels of government higher than the local church, lay elders and ministers in equal numbers constitute the ruling councils of the church.



Our Pastor

A graduate of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, the

Rev. Brian Snyder

has served the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) since 1995. Before coming to Bower Hill in 2010, he pastored churches in northern Pennsylvania and spent five years as a mission school administrator in Cameroon, Africa. Brian has received various preaching awards, and in May 2013, he will have graduated from Colgate Rochester Divinity School with a doctorate in homiletics. His personal and professional interests make frequent appearances in his preaching. These include: poetry, literature, alternative forms of prayer, studies in the historic Jesus, hiking, kayaking, and local history. He and his wife Michelle have two daughters in elementary school.

