



Reaching Out

newsletter of east liberty presbyterian church

August 2010

Pastoral Message

The Rev. Dr. Randall K. Bush, Pastor



A recent issue of *Presbyterians Today* offered a snapshot of what it means to be a Presbyterian. In the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), there are currently 2.1 million members who belong to 10,700 congregations. The highest concentration of Presbyterians is in Pennsylvania (over 215,000 members). Nationally, the average weekly worship attendance is 1.1 million, or just over half the available members. Over \$3 billion is given to church congregations each year, with the median household contribution (2007 data) being \$2,520 or about

3% of after-tax income. Areas of concern are the fact that half of all Presbyterian congregations have fewer than 100 members, and the denomination has lost over 60,000 members each of the last several years. Areas of pride include the 296 mission co-workers and volunteers who serve the Presbyterian Church in more than 50 countries, including our own member, Chenoa Stock, who has just completed three years in Sri Lanka and is off to an assignment in South America.

Similar statistics can be cited regarding ELPC. We are a church whose rich history dates back to 1819. We ended 2009 with 659 active and affiliate members, plus another 126 Friends of ELPC; and the ratio of female to male members is about 2:1. Each week, we average just under 400 people in attendance at our Sunday and Wednesday (Taizé) worship services. For 2010, 229 pledges were received, with a median pledge amount of \$2,328. While we want the number of pledges to increase, the amount pledged by our congregation has increased by 84% since 2004. Other areas of pride include the recently completed Vacation Church School, which averaged 74 children per day in the week-long program.

Statistics are one way to talk about churches, but at best they only offer facts for quick comparison. No statistic can capture the true spirit of a congregation: the way that people minister to and pray for one another, the nurture of mind and body provided by worship and education, the life-giving choices made each day as a direct expression of one's faith in Jesus Christ. Faith is where so much begins. From it flows programs (whose volunteers hours we can compile), worship (whose attendance numbers we can record), and mission (whose charitable contributions we can track). But more importantly, from faith also flows prayer (whose impact we never know for the Spirit intercedes for us in countless ways), hope (whose trajectory can never be traced for it extends far beyond us into future generations), and love (whose depth cannot be measured for it is the foundation of who we are and everything good that emerges from us). For the time being, let us set the numbers aside. When we walk by faith, act with humility, and love with generosity, everything will add up to the glory of God.

Randy Bush

Sunday Morning Services

** Celebration of the Lord's Supper*

Good Samaritan Worship • 8 am

Liturgist: George Rivers

Aug. 1* Rev. Chad Collins, *Pastor, Valley View Presbyterian Church*

Aug. 8 Rev. Miriam Chamberlain

Aug. 15 Dr. Herbert V.R.P. Jones, *Pittsburgh Gospel Choir*

Aug. 22 Rev. Linda Oliver, *Minister of Special Projects, Mt. Ararat Baptist Church*

Aug. 29 To Be Determined

Courtyard Worship • 10 am

Aug. 1* Rev. Dr. Randy Bush

Aug. 8 Rev. Dr. Randy Bush

Aug. 15 Rev. Miriam Chamberlain

Aug. 22 Rev. Heather Schoenewolf

Aug. 29 Rev. Dr. Randy Bush

Holy Ground Service

Returns on Oct. 17 with Father Kiel

Labyrinth Prayer Walk

Please note our new times

Mondays • 9 am–1:30 pm

Wednesdays • 9 am–9 pm

Taizé Prayer Service

Wednesdays • 7 pm

Rev. Christiane Dutton

Session News

The July Session meeting continued business and conversation about ELPC's Strategic Vision process. Included in the business items, was a motion from the Finance Committee seeking approval for the 2011 budget guidelines, which will be passed on to committees for their evaluation and implementation. As part of a conversation about the Strategic Vision, Session discussed two topics:

1. What processes should be followed in order to discern God's will for our lives and our congregation?
2. How can our ministries reach out to the unchurched and deepen the faith commitment of existing members?

Conversations will continue as we seek to articulate the ways we feel passionate about ELPC and name the directions in which we believe God is leading us.

East Liberty Presbyterian Church



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Office Hours

Monday–Friday, 9 am–5 pm
Sunday, 9 am–12:30 pm

Reaching Out Newsletter

Reaching Out is a monthly publication of East Liberty Presbyterian Church and is free to members and friends. Deadlines are the first Thursday of the preceding month.

General Assembly News

The 219th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) met in Minneapolis, from July 3–10. Elder Cindy Bolbach from National Capital Presbytery (Washington, D.C.) was elected as Moderator. Among the issues decided by this General Assembly are the following:

- Presbyteries will vote to revise the denomination's ordination standards, replacing language that has been used to bar gay and lesbian candidates for ordination with better language grounded on candidates' ability to affirm and live into our constitutional and confessional standards.
- Presbyteries also will vote on approving a new Form of Government within our denomination's Book of Order.
- A recent church report on marriage will continue to be studied for two more years. In delaying action on this report, language in the Directory of Worship that refers to marriage as between a man and a woman will not change to reflect current realities of same-sex marriage now legal in several states.

Don't forget, Pittsburgh will be the host for General Assembly in July 2012! Plan to be available to assist as a volunteer for this special occasion!

Christian Education

The Rev. Heather Schoenewolf, Associate Pastor for Educational Ministries

SOUL FOOD *Facilitator: Rev. Cynthia Jackson*

Join us on **Sun., Aug. 8**, at 9 am, in the Pastor's Conference Room.

Youth Ministry

The Rev. Heather Schoenewolf, Associate Pastor for Educational Ministries

Volunteer at Valley View Food Pantry

Two youth are needed to serve on **Sat., Aug. 7**, from 8 am–12 pm. Call Gloria Knopp at **412.441.3800 x22** if you are able to serve.

Trinity Youth Conference: "Out of the Shadows EXPOSED by the Light"

Youth, who've completed grade 9, are invited to attend TYC from **Sun., Aug. 1–7**, at Living Waters Camp in Shellsburg, Pa. TYC focuses on spiritual and leadership development, discipleship and evangelism through worship, activities, and workshops.

Registration forms are available on the Youth Ministry Bulletin Board or at www.trinityyouthconference.org. Contact Pastor Heather for information on scholarships and transportation.



Young Adult Ministry

The Rev. Brian Diebold, Coordinator, Youth and Young Adult Ministries

Young Adult Summer Series *Wed. Aug. 4–25, at 8 pm, in Room 234*

Join us as we continue watching and discussing the DVD-based study of Bishop N.T. Wright's book, *"Simply Christian: Why Christianity Makes Sense."*

Staff Changes

- We welcome **Kevin Copeland**, who has been hired as a part-time member of our security/hospitality team.
- We also want to wish **Tony Haggerty** all the best. Tony retired last month after serving as a maintenance engineer at ELPC for over 24 years.
- Lastly, the Visitation Pastor position will be closed out. We want to thank the **Rev. Miriam Chamberlain**, who has served ELPC in that capacity for over three years. Miriam has done an excellent job visiting our homebound members and providing extra pastoral coverage; we are grateful for her ministry among us.

Conversations on ELPC's Finances

ELPC's Budget and Finance Subcommittee will host conversations on:

- **Sun., Aug. 29**, at 11:30 am, in Room 234
- **Sun., Oct. 24**, at 12:30 pm, in Room 234

These meetings will include a progress report on the Five-Year Sustainability Plan, plus an update on the development of the 2011 Operating Budget.

Classes After Taizé Prayer

The Rev. Christiane Dutton, Minister of Taizé Prayer

Note: Classes begin at 8:15 pm. We will not meet for class on **Wed., Aug. 4.**

Wed., Aug. 11: Tower Sing!

Wed., Aug. 18: Music on the Labyrinth *Led by Charles Anderson*

Wed., Aug. 25: Celebrations!

Do you celebrate a birthday, milestone or anniversary in August? Write it down and put it in the collection plate! We'd like to celebrate with you!

Hope Academy

Linda Addlespurger, Director

Sing, Dance, Act, and Play at ELPC's Hope Academy of Music and the Arts

Hope Academy's 2010–11 course brochure, scholarship application and registration form are available at www.HopeAcademyArts.com. Return completed forms as soon as possible. The scholarship application deadline is **Mon., Aug. 16.**

There is something for everyone!

- New classes include **Boys Dance!** and **Ballet for Teen Dancers.**
- Auditions for **HAT Co** and **HAT Co Band** (our teen theater company and band) are on **Sat., Aug. 28.** Call **412.441.3800 x11** to receive an audition packet.
- Musicians of all ages are invited to participate in **EL CEO** (East Liberty Community Engagement Orchestra). Learn more on **Sat., Aug. 28,** at 2 pm!

Community Development Update

There's a lot of construction happening around ELPC, from the Carnegie Library to the new commercial/residential building on Penn Ave. In addition, East Liberty Development Inc. unveiled the 2010 East Liberty Community Plan. Goals include:

- **Neighborhood Stabilization:** Continuation of a comprehensive housing strategy through a variety of mixed-income alternatives to provide housing for all.
- **Commercial Core Revitalization:** Reinforce East Liberty's commercial heart by providing a mix of national and local products, services and entertainment.
- **Connectivity:** Improve transportation infrastructure. Priorities include pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, bicycling amenities, street grid reconnections, parking, transit development and Penn Circle two way conversion.
- **Greening:** Prioritize green project and sustainability in each development.
- **Workforce:** Unify workforce initiatives into one strategy that addresses employers' and job seekers' needs.
- **Youth Engagement:** Engage youth in decision making and share information about healthy activities, jobs and career preparation.
- **Community Engagement:** Improve collaboration and communication among service providers, neighborhood safety initiatives, small business advocates, block groups and tenant councils.

Email lists have been developed for people who are interested in these areas of the Community Plan. Email Becky Maclean at hera314@gmail.com or Katherine Camp at katherine.camp@eastliberty.org to be added to a list. For more information, visit www.eastlibertypost.com.

VCS Thanks

Pastor Heather and the Christian Education Committee would like to thank everyone who volunteered time, donated supplies, and provided support to our VCS program.

We thank: **Sherry Anderson; Mike Anderson; Linda, TJ, and Tim Benedict; Lora Bethea; Ashley and Sharon Birt; Pastor Randy and Beth Bush; Camara and Camden Copeland; Brian Diebold; Karen Fraser; Sandy Edgcombe; Ben Engelhardt; Peta Harrigan Cole; Carol Hoehn; Francis Irvin and Keith Irvin; Diane Jackson; Pam Kimmel; Carol Kirkpatrick; Maya and Sophie Klancher; Gloria Knopp; Beverly Kreger; Heather Lawrence; Mary Lennox; Taylor Lewand; Mary Alice Lightle; Nancy Magee; Paul Martin; Judy Menk; Katie Mohr; Gail Noden; Argena Olivis and Barbara Olivis; Elaine Phillips and Jack Phillips; Janet Pollard and Jordon Pollard; Jan Pressman; David Schoenewolf; Kay Shissler; John Tunney;** the Toymakers; the Housekeeping/Maintenance and Security Staff; and our ELPC family for your donations and prayers!



EECM

Food Pantry

The "Food of the Month" is **rice**.

Men's Shelter

The Deacons are collecting **razors** and **deodorant** in August.

Please drop donations in the hallway baskets. Your support in the form of donations and prayer is appreciated.



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“...inviting all to join our diverse, inclusive family of faith, transcending boundaries of race, class, ability, culture, age, gender and sexual identity to become one in Christ.”

Name Tag Days

Sun., Sept. 12 and 26

The Membership and Outreach Committee is asking all Deacons, Elders and Committee Chairs to wear their pre-printed name tags on Rally Day (**Sept. 12**) and Visitor’s Sunday (**Sept. 26**). In addition, Committee members are providing sticker tags for others who wish to wear a name tag.



We expect to have a large number of visitors join us for worship. It is our hope that the use of name tags will provide a more welcoming atmosphere and help our visitors feel welcome.

If you have any questions or ideas, contact Pam Ferrante at **412.362.5269** or **pam@jcsafety.com**.

VCS 2010 Update

ELPC’s Vacation Church School was a great success as children “Met God on the Mountain” through the exploration of Biblical stories of mountaintop encounters with God. We rejoice that our daily attendance averaged 74 students, up 38% from last year, as we served 84 children throughout the week.

During our week, we enjoyed singing songs about our “Awesome God” in worship, learned God’s “Rules to Live By” through the story of Moses and the 10 Commandments, made papier-mâché mountains as we learned our Bible geography, played with the parachute in the gym and water balloons at Squaw Valley Park, cooked s’mores in our courtyard, and painted symbols of peace on our feet as we remembered to be God’s messengers of peace.



Children enjoy the day at Squaw Valley Park.

Rally Day: On **Sun., Sept. 12**, we will resume our regular schedule with Sunday School Classes at 9:45 am, Good Samaritan Worship at 8 am, Journey Worship at 8:45 am, and Sanctuary Worship at 11 am.