

“God Doesn’t Call Women to Preach...”

By Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy



At least that is what I was taught the majority of my life, and I believed it. God obviously had other plans. Imagine my surprise when I realized that God was preparing and calling me into ministry.

In 1999, I was approached by a woman whom I had met the night before, and she shared that God had revealed to her that I would be called to preach. I didn’t believe her. One year later, after experiencing a tragic and personal life change, God revealed that now was the time for me to acknowledge and walk in my calling. It took me another six months to gather the courage to seek pastoral guidance, nurture and training.

Many of you have followed my journey into the ministry, beginning with my being ordained and licensed to preach the gospel by the Baptist denomination. Even though I received training and was afforded many opportunities to exercise my gifts, I believed God was calling me to complete my formal seminary education. So, in 2006, I began the adventure of matriculating at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. ELPC’s generous and encouraging support has enabled me to work towards the completion of a Master of Divinity degree. I anticipate graduating in 2013.

After becoming an ELPC member in 2008—and with my educational pursuit underway—I realized that in order for me to walk fully into my call, I needed to seek ordination in the PC(USA). This past October, ELPC’s Session approved me for presentation to the Pittsburgh Presbytery as an Inquirer, and the Presbytery Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) approved my Inquirer status in December 2010. As an Inquirer, I will work closely with my ELPC sponsor, Judy Menk, and the CPM mentors assigned to me for the next year, completing various tasks and prayerfully moving to Candidacy for Ordination in Word and Sacrament status in 2012.

I have come to realize that God calls and uses whom God pleases. I am humbled that God has called, prepared and qualified me for service. I have come to believe that—just as God told Jeremiah, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you. And before you were born I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations.” (Jeremiah 1:5)—God has called, consecrated and appointed me a preacher of the Gospel. My call is never more evident to me than when I stand, insecure, nervous and feeble, to proclaim the Gospel, and know that I don’t do so in my own strength, but that God, through the Holy Spirit, speaks through me. I absolutely believe that God calls women to preach, minister and serve, and I’m thankful that God has called me.

Editor’s Note

This month, look for these articles written by a member of our faith community. Each article will be identified by a heart symbol.



This month, look for these articles:

- “God Doesn’t Call Women to Preach...”
- African-American Health Concerns
- Men’s Fellowship
- When Israel Was in Egypt’s Land

Sunday Morning Services

* Celebration of the Lord’s Supper

Good Samaritan Worship • 8 am

Liturgist: George Rivers

- Feb. 6* Rev. John Welch, *President, Pittsburgh Interfaith Impact Network*
- Feb. 13 Rabbi Gibson, *Senior Rabbi, Temple Sinai, Squirrel Hill*
- Feb. 20 Charles Nordquist, *Elder*
- Feb. 27 Cheryl Tupper, *Program Officer, Arthur Vining Davis Foundation, Jacksonville, Fla.*

Journey Worship • 8:45 am

- Feb. 6* Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy
- Feb. 13 Rev. Heather Schoenewolf
- Feb. 20 Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy
- Feb. 27 Rev. Dr. Randy Bush

Sanctuary Worship • 11 am

- Feb. 6* Rev. Dr. Randy Bush
- Feb. 13 Dr. Audrey Thompson
- Feb. 20 Rev. Dr. Randy Bush
- Feb. 27 Rev. Heather Schoenewolf

Holy Ground Service

Our Holy Ground service will resume on **Sun., March 20**, at 6 pm, and continue every third Sunday until November.

Labyrinth Prayer Walk

Mondays • 9 am–1:30 pm
Wednesdays • 9 am–9 pm

Taizé Prayer Service

Wednesdays • 7 pm
Rev. Christiane Dutton

East Liberty Presbyterian Church



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Office Hours

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

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Pastor

The Rev. Heather Schoenewolf
Associate Pastor for Educational Ministries

Linda Addlespurger
Director of Hope Academy

The Rev. Brian Diebold
Coordinator, Youth Ministry

The Rev. Christiane Dutton
Minister of Taizé Prayer

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Music Director Emeritus

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.

Pastoral Message

The Rev. Dr. Randall K. Bush, Pastor



On the list of best non-fiction books for 2010 is a book by Isabel Wilkerson called *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration*. It is a lively account of the experiences of more than six million African-Americans who migrated from the Southern states to the North in search of better jobs and living conditions. It tells the stories of three individuals who left Mississippi, Florida, and Louisiana between 1937 and 1953. It is fascinating to read these stories of exhausting cross-country trips across a very segregated countryside, and how the families ended up in crowded apartment houses and ghettos, having to confront incredible prejudices regarding these new urban workers.

While Pittsburgh was not one of the destinations for the book's main characters, our city did appear in one chapter.

"Many companies didn't hire colored workers—not because of an explicit Berlin Wall of exclusion written into law, as in the South, but because their white workers just wouldn't stand for it. A glass plant in Pittsburgh tried to hire colored workers, but the white workers ran them out by cursing them and making conditions so unpleasant they were forced to quit. At a steel mill there, the white bargemen threatened to walk out when black workers were introduced among them. Millworkers were only appeased by the provision of separate quarters for the colored workers." (p. 316, slightly edited)

These experiences in Pittsburgh were typical of Northern cities receiving migrants from Southern states. Yet an additional value in studying this historical narrative is to consider how migration and "uprootedness" is so central to the Christian story. No matter where you turn in the bible, you run into stories of people on the move, trying to "sing the Lord's song in a foreign land" (Ps. 137). Stories like Adam and Eve living "east of Eden," Abram and Sarai moving toward Palestine, Moses and the Hebrew people seeking the Promised Land, Ruth following Naomi from Moab to Bethlehem, Jesus and his disciples walking the back roads of Galilee, or Paul spreading the gospel on his various missionary journeys.

In our own lives, think how often people move today and recall for yourself what it feels like to settle into a new community. Remember that one criteria of faith and righteousness involves how well we welcome the stranger in our midst. The migration experiences of previous generations continue today for many, many people in our own city. How well are we as individuals and as a congregation welcoming the sojourner and traveler?

One of the phrases we are considering as part of our church's Strategic Vision process is "radical hospitality." Give some thought to how that phrase can come alive for you in your daily walk of faith. As followers of Christ called to forgive as we've been forgiven and to love as we've been loved, we are also to welcome as we've all been welcomed. Perhaps by doing the latter work first, the other two categories will be easier to accomplish as well.

Randy Bush

Dr. Audrey Thompson Visits



It is our pleasure to welcome Dr. Audrey Thompson as a guest preacher for the 11 am, Sanctuary worship on **Sun., Feb. 13.**

She is the new Assistant Professor of Homiletics at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (PTS). She comes to PTS from prior study and teaching at Candler School of Theology,

Emory University, Princeton Theological Seminary, and Virginia Union University. Ordained by the Progressive Baptist denomination, Dr. Thompson is a fresh voice in the African-American preaching tradition and a welcome addition to PTS.

Shakespeare Contest Showcase of Finalists

Hope Academy Shakespeare students have been busy preparing for the 2011 Pittsburgh Public Theater Shakespeare Monologue and Scene Contest.

Join us for the Showcase of Finalists on **Mon., Feb. 14,**



at 7 pm. The event is *free* and open to the public. You may be able to help us cheer on some of our own students!

Hope Academy students (Ainslei Payne-Reid, Larry White, Angelina Winbush and Zöe Taeger) perform the Capulet family scene from *Romeo and Juliet*.

Annual Congregational Meeting

Join us for our annual congregational meeting on **Sun., Feb. 20,** following the 11 am worship service.

A simple lunch will be provided, followed by an opportunity to review our ministry areas and committee work from 2010, and to hear reports from our Personnel and Centennial Fund Committees. Most importantly, the gathered body will be presented with a slate of candidates for Elder, Deacon, Centennial Fund, and Nominating Committee, which they will be asked to consider and vote upon.



Session News

At the January Session meeting, the elders and deacons reviewed the accomplishments and challenges of 2010, while looking ahead to the opportunities in 2011. Some of the items considered included the following:

- The 2011 budget was reviewed and approved, with gratitude to the congregation for their financial support in the recent Stewardship Campaign and to the Finance Committee for their diligent work.
- Plans were finalized for a Strategic Vision leadership retreat, and for upcoming congregational input sessions
- In 2010, 35 new members and friends were received, and congregational pledging for 2011 increased 7 percent over 2010.

The Peace Committee Announces: *Understanding Islam*

From July 4–10, at Ghost Ranch, Abiquiu, New Mexico

Drs. Ronald and Alan Stone will teach a course at Ghost Ranch on *Understanding Islam*. The brothers are students of religion and society, receiving their doctorates from Columbia and Chicago Universities respectively. The mornings will be devoted to the history of Islam—from Mohammed to Islam in Indonesia—and the evenings will look at present conflicts involving Islam in light of Presbyterian peacemaking theological ethics. The afternoons are free for hiking, swimming, or visiting sites in beautiful Northern New Mexico.

The ranch, managed by the Presbyterian Church, is regarded by many as the most beautiful scenery in New Mexico, framed by red rock canyon walls.

Contact Ron Stone or the Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy (**412.441.3800 x30**) for more details on the ranch or the course. If there is sufficient interest, plans can be made to travel together. Visit www.ghost ranch.org, where registration materials are available.



Christian Education

Contemporaries Class

Feb. 6: Reading Scripture Together

Combined with Journey with Scripture (see below)

Feb. 13: To Be Determined

Feb. 20: The L.I.V.I.N.G. Ministry

Led by Charles Chapman

Feb. 27: The Life and Legacy of Dr. King

Led by Rev. Dr. Randy Bush

Journey with Scripture

Feb. 6: 1 Cor. 2:1–12; Isa. 58:1–9a; Ps. 112; Mt. 5:13–20

Feb. 13: Deut. 30:15–20 or Sir. 15:15–20; Ps. 119:1–8; 1 Cor. 3:1–9; Mt. 5:21–37

Feb. 20: Lev. 19:1–2, 9–18; Ps. 119:33–40; 1 Cor. 3:10–11, 16–23; Mt. 5:38–48

Feb. 27: Isa. 49:8–16a; Ps. 131; 1 Cor. 4:1–5; Mt. 6:24–34

Parenting Circle

Feb. 6 and 20–27: Book Discussion on *Traveling Mercies: Some Thoughts on Faith* by Anne Lamott

Feb. 13: Sharing Joys and Concerns

Seekers

Feb. 6: “What ARE they thinking?” Misunderstood and Misinterpreted Verses of the Quran

Led by Karen Hussaini, SFH Islamic Interfaith Network

Feb. 13: Feb 13: Woman in Modern Day Iran

Led by Akram Kamrani, a native of Tehran, Iran

Feb. 20: Christianity in China

Led by Barbara and Dan Ernsberger, Susan Tusick, and Mike Vetovich (Shadyside Presbyterian Church)

Feb. 27: Atonement Theology

Led by Rev. Heather Schoenewolf

Soul Food

Feb. 6–27: Courage

Young Adult Ministry

In February, we will explore the origins, literalness and content of the Bible.

Wed., Feb. 9: Word Origins

At 8 pm, in the Pastor’s Conference Room

Sat., Feb. 10: *Inherit the Wind*

At 7 pm, in the Second Floor Parlor

Sun., Feb. 27: Word Games

At 3 pm, in the Pastor’s Conference Room

Youth Ministry

Wednesday Connections Schedule:

- **3:30–4 pm:** Open gym for grades 1–6
- **4–5 pm:** Crafts and homework help for grades 1–6; open gym for grades 7–12
- **5–6 pm:** Hope Academy classes for all ages, or homework help in the McKelvy Room
- **6–6:30 pm:** Dinner
- **6:30–8 pm: club 116** Bible study

This spring, **club 116** explores the **Big Questions of Faith**.

Confirmation Class

We will next meet on **Sun., Feb. 13**.

Senior High Mission Trip to New Orleans

This year’s Mission Trip is to New Orleans, from **Sun.–Sat., July 17–23**. **RSVPs** and a non-refundable **\$50 deposit** are due by **Tues., May 31**. Check the website and youth calendar for full requirements.

Exercise Classes Resume

- **Tai Chi** Tuesdays, from 10–11 am and 6–7 pm
Classes begin on **Tues., Feb. 1**. The cost is \$25 for 10 classes. Pre-registration is required.
 - **Yoga** Thursdays, from 7:15–8:45 pm
 - **JourneyDance** Fri., Feb. 11, from 7–8 pm
- Call Kate Carlson at **412.441.3800 x17** for details.

Presbyterian Women

Tues., Feb. 1: *Journeys Through Revelation*

Join us at 10 am, in the Second Floor Parlor as Kay Shissler leads our study of Revelation 12, **Witness to Hope: Woman, the Dragon, and Earth’s Daring Rescue**. A potluck lunch follows. Beverages and soup are provided. Bring a side to share and your own place setting. Call Diane Jackson at **412.441.6021** for details.

Classes After Taizé Prayer

Note: Classes are held on Wednesdays, at 8:15 pm.

Feb. 2: Envisioning Our Dream Writing Workshop

Led by Laurie Arnold

Feb. 9: Hebrew Chant

Led by David Goldstein

Feb. 16: Sacred Harp/Shape Note Singing

Led by Charles Anderson

Feb. 23: Celebrations!

Love and All That Jazz

Sat., Feb. 12, at 7 pm

ELPC presents its fifth annual performance of **Love and All That Jazz**, a love-inspired evening of poetry and song in the spirit of Valentine’s Day, to benefit Hope Academy! Full of fabulous love songs and poetry, this family-friendly event features a mix of poetry and song from Classical and Jazz to Broadway and Rock. Visit www.HopeAcademyArts.com for the full slate of performers. This is a “love fest” you won’t want to miss!

Tickets are available at the door or in advance (**\$10** for adults, **\$5** for seniors and college students, and **free** for children and youth 18 and under).

African-American Health Concerns *By Pat Krimmel*

Stroke: A stroke is a life-threatening condition and the third leading cause of death in the U.S. It occurs when a blood vessel in the brain bursts or a blockage develops. Without treatment, cells in the brain begin to die, which can result in serious disability or death.

Researchers report that African Americans are twice as likely as whites to have a stroke, and women ages 35–64 are three times as likely to have a stroke as men of the same age. Risk factors include: high blood pressure, obesity, diabetes, tobacco use, and sickle cell anemia.



Diabetes: About 14.7 percent (or 3.7 million) of all African Americans—ages 20 and older—have diagnosed and undiagnosed diabetes. Of those who were aware of their risks, less than half tried to prevent it. Symptoms include: frequent urination, extreme thirst or hunger, and blurry vision.

In most cases, type 2 diabetes is preventable, and easy lifestyle habits can reduce your risk of getting the real thing. Simple things you can do include: lose weight, take daily walks, avoid fast foods, eat more vegetables and less red meat and sugars, and get your blood sugar tested.



Stroke Symptoms

- Numbness or weakness of the body, especially on one side;
- Vision changes in one or both eyes;
- Severe headache with unknown cause;
- Problems with dizziness, walking, or balance; and
- Confusion, difficulty speaking or understanding others.

Use the **F.A.S.T.** test to spot symptoms:

Face: Ask for a smile. Does one side droop?

Arms: When raised, does one side drift down?

Speech: Can the person repeat a simple sentence? Do they slur words?

Time: Time is critical. Call 911 if any symptoms are present.

Youth Volunteers in Ministry *By Wil Forrest, VIM Coordinator*

This February and March, the Volunteers in Ministry program will be focusing on opportunities for youth volunteers. A national study, conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau and affiliates, found the following facts about young volunteers:

- **Millions of Young People Volunteer:** 15.5 million youths, ages 12–18, volunteered for over 1.3 billion hours in 2004, and the number has grown!
- **Young People Volunteer More Than Adults:** Young people volunteered at nearly twice the rate of adults with 55 percent of young people volunteering, compared with only 29 percent of adults.
- **Volunteering Helps Young People Succeed:** Youth who volunteer are less likely to engage in risky behavior, are more likely to feel connected to their communities, and tend to do better in school.
- **Altruism Is the Driving Motivator:** Youth who volunteer do so out of altruism, strongly agreeing with statements such as “I would like to help make the world a better place,” and “It’s important to do things for others.” Only five percent of students volunteer because of a school requirement.

Considering the enriched lives led by youth volunteers, I will be reaching out during our education hour to find new ways to support youth volunteers.

When Israel Was in Egypt’s Land *Continued from page 6*

Based on the passages in Exodus when God sends Moses to gain freedom for the Israelites, this spiritual represented the slaves’ desire for freedom in this country. As we sing this spiritual, and others, throughout Black History Month, let us remember those who gave so much to the cause of ending slavery in our country and those who are still working today to achieve freedom for all God’s people around the world.

Visit <http://ctl.du.edu/spirituals/> for more information on the history of spirituals.

ELPC People

Good News

- **Jarrett and Chrissy Turner** are the proud parents of a baby girl, **Mya Marionna Turner**, born on Dec. 19.
- **Sarai Thomas** is the proud parent of a baby boy, **La'Trell William Moore**, born on Nov. 24.

Thanks

• The Nelson family would like to offer thanks to the pastors, staff, and members who were so very helpful since Sarah’s death. Special thanks to all the unnamed Deacons and Presbyterian Women who provided copious amounts of great food and service at the reception.

World Day of Prayer

Fri., March 4, at 11 am, at ELPC

Join Christians in the East End of Pittsburgh for a vibrant service of song and praise at the World Day of Prayer. This year’s service, written by the women of Chile, asks “How Many Loaves Have You?” A luncheon of foods from Chile follows worship.



The Cathedral of Hope

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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.”

Men’s Fellowship

By Joe Kennedy, Leader of Men’s Fellowship



Celebrating our 10th year of existence, the Men’s Fellowship represents a bi-weekly gathering of men interested in growing through scripture and sharing life experiences in a way that will ultimately enhance the Kingdom. There are 14 denominations within our ranks, comprised of guys in their

20’s–80’s. This unlikely composition is a way for God to transcend religious categories.

Since the group is comprised of so many backgrounds, we have learned to listen to one another differently. As a result, empathy, compassion, sensitivity, love and caring have replaced argumentative debate. Seven ministers are part of our spiritual foundation. Their cooperation with our lay leaders keeps the group fresh and open to the direction of the Holy Spirit.

Join us on **Sat., Feb. 5** and **19**, from 9–11 am, at ELPC. For details, visit www.mensfellowshippittsburgh.org.

When Israel Was in Egypt’s Land

By Dr. Ed Moore, ELPC’s Music Director and Organist



The Association for the Study of African American Life and History has designated the 2011 National Black History Theme as *African Americans and the Civil War*, to honor the efforts of African Americans to end slavery. Music played an important role in the cause of freedom during this period. One song that represented this desire for freedom is the spiritual, *Go Down, Moses (When Israel Was in Egypt’s Land, #334* in our Presbyterian Hymnal).

The term “spiritual” was not used to describe these songs until the Civil War, when they became known outside of the African-American community.

When Israel Was in Egypt’s Land 334

GO DOWN MOSES 85.8.5 with refrain

African-American spiritual
African-American spiritual
Arr. Melva W. Costen, 1989

1. When Is - rael was in E - gypt's land, Let my peo-ple go!
2. "Thus saith the Lord," bold Mo - ses said: Let my peo-ple go!
3. "No more shall they in bond-age toil," Let my peo-ple go!

The Rev. Lewis Lockwood, from New York, was a missionary at Fort Monroe in Virginia, where he heard the singing of the fugitive slaves (referred to as contrabands). One song that caught his attention was the one that became known as *Go Down, Moses*. He sent the words to New York, where they were published in the *New York Tribune*, in 1861. Soon after, sheet music was published with the title *The Song of the “Contrabands” – “O Let My People Go.”* The version we are familiar with today is based on the one published by the Fisk Jubilee Singers from Fisk University, in 1872.

Continued on page 5

Offices Closed: Offices will be closed all day on **Mon., Feb. 21**, for Presidents’ Day.