

## Sunday Services

*\*Celebration of the Lord's Supper*

### Journey Worship • 8:45 am

*Theme: Emerging*

Dec. 4\* Rev. Heather Schoenewolf

Dec. 11 Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy

Dec. 18 Rev. Dr. Randy Bush

Dec. 25 *No Journey worship service*

### Sanctuary Worship • 11 am

Dec. 4\* Rev. Dr. Randy Bush

Dec. 11 Rev. Dr. Randy Bush

Dec. 18 Rev. Dr. Randy Bush

Dec. 25 Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy

### Labyrinth Prayer Walk

*Mondays • 7 am–1 pm*

*Wednesdays • 9 am–9 pm*

### Taizé Prayer Service

*Wednesdays • 7 pm*

*Live stream available at [ELPC.church](http://ELPC.church)*

Rev. Mary Lynn Callahan

## Do You Hear What I Hear?



Join us at 10 am, on **Sun., Dec. 11**, for a fresh retelling of the Christmas Story by our children and youth in the Sanctuary. This year's pageant, *Do You Hear What I Hear?*, was written by ELPC member Ashley Birt.

We remember that many voices told of the Christ Child's birth—from angels to shepherds, and even a star! As these familiar characters tell this important story, we will listen together, so that the good news might take on fresh meaning for us.

### Pageant Rehearsal

All children from infancy through grade 8 are invited to participate in our pageant. Rehearsal is at 9:30 am, on **Sat., Dec. 10**, followed by a brief celebration hosted by the Christian Education Committee. Children should report to their Church School classroom to be fitted with a costume.



## Christmas Eve Services

Join us in the Sanctuary for Christmas Eve worship on **Sat., Dec. 24**. Both services will feature the celebration of the Lord's Supper and candle lighting.

- **Friends and Family Service** will be at 5 pm. Pastor Heather will preach.
- **Candlelight Service** will be at 11 pm. Prelude music will begin at 10:30 pm. Pastor Randy will preach.



## Christmas Day Celebration

All are invited to celebrate Christmas together as a church family after Sanctuary worship on **Sun., Dec. 25**, in the McKelvy Room. Our time together will include brunch, music, and fellowship. Please RSVP to Wil Forrest at [Wil@coh.net](mailto:Wil@coh.net) or **412.260.2554** by **Sun., Dec. 18**.

## Explore ELPC

### Tour the Trinity Chapel

Join Elder Penn Hackney following Sanctuary worship on **Sun., Dec. 4**, to visit and learn about the small, beautiful Trinity Chapel.

Gather at the front of the Sanctuary following the organ postlude, and allow 20–25 minutes for the tour.

### Private Tours are Available

Tours of our cathedral can be arranged for the Christmas season for family or friends who may be visiting from out of town. Tours can be customized to meet the interests, schedule, and composition of your group.

Please contact business manager Pam Kimmel at **412.441.3800 x18**, Monday–Friday, to place a request.

## East Liberty Presbyterian Church



*The Cathedral of Hope*  
116 South Highland Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15206

Tel: 412.441.3800  
Fax: 412.441.4422

[www.ELPC.church](http://www.ELPC.church)

### Staff Leadership

The Rev. Dr. Randall K. Bush  
*Pastor*

The Rev. Heather Schoenewolf  
*Associate Pastor for Educational Ministries*

The Rev. Patrice L. Fowler-Searcy  
*Associate Pastor for Mission Ministries*

The Rev. Mary Lynn Callahan  
*Director of Spiritual Life Ministries and  
Minister of Taizé Prayer*

Linda Addlespurger  
*Director of Hope Academy*

Sharron Boddy  
*Seminary Intern*

Wil Forrest  
*Coordinator of Young Adult  
and Outreach Programs*

Sara Hackett  
*Coordinator of Christian Education  
and Youth Ministry*

Pamela M. Kimmel  
*Business Administrator*

Paul Martin  
*Facilities Manager*

Dr. Edward Alan Moore  
*Music Director and Organist*

The Rev. Dr. Robert Chesnut  
*Pastor Emeritus*

The Rev. Dr. J. Richard Szeremany  
*Music Director Emeritus*

## Pastoral Message

*The Rev. Dr. Randall K. Bush, Pastor*



I'm not sure if nativity scenes on Christmas cards actually catch the moment we should be remembering as this crazy year winds to a close. Don't get me wrong—remembering the setting where the Christ child lay humbly in a manger, surrounded by Mary, Joseph, animals and shepherds is a healing and lovely reminder of how God came to us in the form of an infant. It offers us a vision of peace in times of turmoil and comfort when so much seems to be uncertain and broken.

But there is a scene prior to the Bethlehem manger scene that needs to be pondered during Advent and Christmas. Not the scene of the Holy Family making their way from Nazareth down to Bethlehem. Not even the image of the angels appearing to the shepherds who were watching their flocks by night in the fields. In fact, it is not something that can be depicted in artwork or stained glass windows. It is the moment when this world's reality was shattered by the in-breaking of God's full reality through the incarnation of Christ.

We glimpsed part of that divine moment when the angel told Mary that she would bear a son. We focus on that amazing moment when the gospel of John tells us how "the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory." We humbly picture that miraculous moment through the hymn found in Paul's letter to the Philippians, where it says "Jesus did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself and was born in human likeness." Ultimately, God broke into our world. God shattered whatever barrier we imagine exists between earth and heaven and came to us—literally right beside us, in our very midst, into human history long ago as well as our present day and age.

To me, that changes every conversation we have had during the past year. God has broken into our world to offer healing, hope and redemption. God has broken into our world and been beside us, as we have witnessed a year of continued fighting in Syria and terrorist attacks around the world, as we celebrated another Olympics and yet struggled to rebuild after Hurricane Matthew, as Black Lives Matter and the Standing Rock protests continue to push for justice while the recent national election appears to reflect how our country has moved in a direction of fearfulness and isolationism.

If I truly believe in the Christmas represented by nativity scene cards and the scripture proclamation of Christ's birth, then my first response to all historical events is to reflect on God's presence in the midst of this world—weeping alongside God in Christ who weeps over our violent ways; speaking out beside the prophetic God in Christ who knows that silence and despair have no place in this world's unfinished incarnation of a kingdom of justice and mercy and welcome. Christmas started when God said "Enough. I will come to you that you may find your way back to me and to one another." May we remember that heavenly promise as cards are opened, presents are exchanged, and a world around us waits—waits—waits and hopes for the peace that passes all understanding.

*Randy Bush*

# Mission Matters

The Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy, Associate Pastor for Mission Ministries

## Sat., Dec. 3: Local Mission Opportunities 9 am–3 pm

People of all ages and skill levels are invited to a workday with Open Hand Ministries (OHM) and Garfield Community Farm. OHM also invites you to help on Wednesdays and Fridays. For details, contact Emily Rosenthal at [ejr116@gmail.com](mailto:ejr116@gmail.com) or 412.963.0139 or Pastor Patrice at [Patricefs@coh.net](mailto:Patricefs@coh.net) or 412.441.3800 x30.

## The Christmas Giving Tree

Every year, the Deacons organize the Christmas Giving Tree to benefit children and families from East End Cooperative Ministry, as well as our ELPC Family Enrichment and Christian Education ministries.

The Giving Tree will be set up before and after our Journey and Sanctuary services on **Sun., Dec. 4**, and our Taizé service on **Wed., Dec. 7**.

Wrapped gifts with tags are due in the church office by noon on **Sun., Dec. 11**. To make a monetary donation, make your check payable to “ELPC Giving Tree.”

## The Chapel Market Holiday Schedule

As a reminder, The Chapel Market is open on Mondays, from 10 am–12 pm, and on Thursdays, from 6–8 pm. The last day for shopping before Christmas will be on **Thurs., Dec. 15**, as The Chapel Market will be closed during the holidays.

## Sun., Dec. 18: Christmas Joy Offering to be Received

The 2016 Christmas Joy Offering celebrates the coming of Jesus Christ, the “wondrous gift” of God with us. Jesus arrived in a humble stable in small and insignificant Bethlehem, to lead and teach in truth and love, and bring about God’s salvation to the world. What a “wondrous gift” indeed! This was a gift so profound that the only response was the bringing of more gifts; the Magi arrived with gold, frankincense, and myrrh to honor the Christ Child.



### CHRISTMAS JOY SPECIAL OFFERINGS

Since the 1930s, the PC(USA) has provided the opportunity for congregations to join this celebration of God’s wondrous gift by supporting those in need of help and hope through the Christmas Joy Offering. Our gifts offer financial assistance to individuals and families who have dedicated their lives to the church, and also supports racial/ethnic education and leadership development programs for students attending Presbyterian-related schools and colleges.

In gratitude to God for the wondrous gift of Jesus, ELPC will receive the Christmas Joy Offering on **Sun., Dec. 18, 2016**. Please give generously.

## Unite on World Healing Day, Dec. 31

At noon (Greenwich Time) on Dec. 31, 1986, men, women, and children around the world gathered to participate in the most comprehensive prayer activity in the history—a planetary affirmation of peace, and love, forgiveness and understanding involving millions of people in a simultaneous global mind link. The purpose was to reverse the polarity of the negative force field in the race of mind, achieve a critical mass of spiritual consciousness, and usher in a new era of Peace on Earth.

On **Sat., Dec. 31**, 30 years later, we will gather for meditation and to walk the Labyrinth with our brothers and sisters in the ELPC Social Hall from 6:50–8 am.

## Update on the Stewardship Campaign

Pledges for our recent Stewardship Campaign, *Rebuilding Bodies and Souls*, as well as other contributions to the church budget will be accepted for credit in 2016 until **Wed., Dec. 28**.

The Session and staff are very grateful for your tithes, pledges, and offerings in support of our operating budget, as well as our *Building Our Future* capital campaign. If you have questions on the status of your giving, call Deborah Marx, our church bookkeeper, at **412.441.3800 x34**.



## Renovations are Coming Soon!

We anticipate renovation work to begin on ELPC in early 2017. To help prepare for this, there are two occasions in which you can meet with Renovations Committee members and hear more about the extent of the work and timing for the construction.

Gather in the First Floor Library following Sanctuary worship on either **Sun., Dec. 4** or **Dec. 18**.



# Christian Education

**Note:** Classes begin at 9:45 am.

*The Rev. Heather Schoenewolf, Associate Pastor for Educational Ministries*

## Church School Class Notes

There will be no Church School classes on **Sun., Dec. 25** or **Jan. 1**, so that we can enjoy our annual Christmas pageant and the holiday season.

Mark your calendars now for an Intergenerational Winter Rally Day celebration on **Sun., Jan. 8**, from 9:45–10:45 am. Gather together and explore the Scriptures through multi-sensory activity stations, which will re-appear in worship during Sanctuary worship. Join us for a continental breakfast and time of fellowship, as we begin the new year. The Christian Education Committee will provide fruit and bagels, but please bring a breakfast bread or pastry to share.

## Contemporaries *Second Floor Parlor*

*Facilitator: Mary Alice Lightle*

### **Dec. 4: The Stranger and Hospitality: The East End of Pittsburgh**

Mark Roth and the Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy will lead our discussion, *How shall we respond faithfully to the changes in East Liberty and Lawrenceville?*

### **Dec. 18: The Stranger and Hospitality**

Our Advent and Christmas series continues. Leader and specific topic to be announced.

## Journey with Scripture *Second Floor Library*

*Facilitators: Jan Lyle Irvin, Lora Bethea*

*To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ—Romans 1:7.* The apostle Paul proclaims God's assurance and encouragement to the Christian community living in an empire. Like other Advent readings, God calls us to justice—to recognize and receive Christ in the world. Join us as we reflect on these readings:

**Dec. 4:** Isaiah 11:1–10; Psalm 72:1–7, 18–19;  
Romans 15:4–13; Matthew 3:1–12

**Dec. 18:** Isaiah 7:10–16; Psalm 80:1–7, 17–19;  
Romans 1:1–7; Matthew 1:18–25

## Seekers *Room 234*

*Facilitator: Gwen Puza*

### **Dec. 4: “Easter and Christmas Christians” and God’s Gift of Unique Presence**

Our church will experience an increase in attendance during the Christmas and Easter seasons. Paul Seif will lead us in examining the possible reasons why some people only attend during those times, how we can serve them, and make them comfortable with us. In our age of declining church attendance (though statistically steady religious affinity, according to poll data), a stigma can surround those who attend church only occasionally.

We will learn about recent studies that show that occasional church attendance decreases depression, as well as incidence of suicidal tendencies among the clinically depressed—even in cases where individuals only attend church on Easter and Christmas. In light of this research, as a community of faith, we will learn together how we can cherish, serve alongside, and minister to those whom God will invite into our sacred communities this holiday season.

Paul recently completed his studies at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and is currently pursuing a call towards ordination in the PC(USA). Paul was a seminary intern at ELPC from 2014–15, and continues to volunteer at **club one sixteen**, our mid-week children and youth programming.

### **Dec. 18: Gifts of the Season**

Class members and invited guests will share their talents, thoughts, and family customs that commemorate the birth of Jesus Christ. Everyone is welcome to come and enjoy music, poems, readings, and personal reflections that hopefully will enrich your own holiday.

## Soul Food *Third Floor Music Room*

*Facilitators: Rev. Joe Hajdu and other class members*

### **Dec. 4 and 18: Find Ourselves/Finding God**

We will discuss the sixth and final chapter of our current book, *The Gift of Being Yourself*, by David Benner.

## Young Adults *Pastor’s Conference Room*

*Facilitator: Wil Forrest*

### **Dec. 18: A Christmas Event**

Celebrate the season with breakfast, scripture, and friends.

# Hope Academy of Music and the Arts

Linda Addlespurger, Director

## Fall Term Open Classes and Recitals

Our young singers and musicians will present work from their fall classes and private lessons in a series of "open classes" and recitals. This is a great opportunity for interested families to come and see Hope Academy's program in action and meet the teaching artists. Everyone is invited and it's all FREE! Visit the event calendar at [ELPC.church](http://ELPC.church) for complete details.

- Sat., Dec. 10: Open Classes—Music Theater and Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre Dance
- Sun., Dec. 4 and 11: Private Lesson Voice and Instrument Recitals
- Tues., Dec. 13: Hope Academy Theater Company (HAT Co) Holiday Concert



## Youth Ministry

Sara Hackett, Coordinator of Christian Education and Youth Ministry

### Saturdays: Youth Basketball 5–8 pm

Boys in grades 9–12 are welcome to join us to play basketball! We will not meet on Sat., Dec. 24, or 31. Questions? Contact Anthony Williams.

### Sat., Dec. 10: Jr. High Service Project 11:30 am–2:30 pm

Following our Christmas pageant rehearsal, youth in grades 6–8 will share lunch and then spend the afternoon shopping for Christmas gifts for children who are in foster care through Project STAR, a program of the Children's Institute.

### Sun., Dec. 4: DG2! @ ELPC 12:30–3 pm

Doing Good Together!—a service based partnership with youth at Rodef Shalom—is starting back up. Youth in grades 4–12 and their families are encouraged to come and serve in a variety of ways, make new friends, and have fun together, all while exploring the theme of what it means to be a good neighbor. Lunch will be served.

## Young Adult Ministry

Wil Forrest, Coordinator of Young Adult and Outreach Programs



### Fri., Dec. 2: First Friday @ Oglebay 7 pm

Meet at ELPC and we will spend an evening enjoying warm cocoa, delicious cookies, and dazzling lights as we take a road trip to enjoy Oglebay's Winter Festival of Lights. Contact Wil in advance to reserve a seat in the church van. Come celebrate the season! Learn more at [Oglebay-resort.com/festival](http://Oglebay-resort.com/festival).

Our Young Adult Ministry is for you, and your friends are welcome too! For details or to ask questions, contact Wil Forrest at [Wil@coh.net](mailto:Wil@coh.net) or 412.441.3800 x14.

## club one sixteen

Wednesdays, from 3:30–7:30 pm

All families of children who attend **club one sixteen** are invited to join us for a meal and a Christmas Pageant on **Wed., Dec. 14**.

Please note, **Wed., Dec. 14**, is our last day of **club one sixteen** for 2016. We will resume on **Wed., Jan. 11**.

Visit [ELPC.church](http://ELPC.church) for updates and our complete schedule.

## ELPC College Reunion

College-age young adults are invited to come catch up over dinner and games on **Wed., Dec. 21**, at 6 pm. For additional details and to RSVP, please contact Sara Hackett.

Thank you in advance to Jason Ferrante (college student) and Pam Walaski (mom and member of the Youth and Young Adult Committee) for hosting!



## Support the Toymakers' Annual Sale

The Toymakers have been working all year, producing toys for young children. Their devoted efforts will culminate with the annual Christmas sale following Sanctuary worship on **Sun., Dec. 4**, in the McKelvy Room.

Available will be hand-made, holiday-related items made of wood and stained glass, as well as toys. Proceeds from the sale (you determine the amount) will keep the Toymakers in wood and paint—and the occasional tool—for the year ahead.

ELPC members have always been most generous, and your continued support is greatly appreciated.



## Feeling Crafty?

Christmas is quickly approaching and we need people of all skill levels to help us complete our projects. Everyone is welcome!

Questions? Contact Diane Jackson at **412.441.6021** or [dnjcks@verizon.net](mailto:dnjcks@verizon.net).

- The **Knitting Group** will meet on **Tues., Dec. 6**, from 1–3 pm, in Room 244.
- The **Toy Makers' Group** will meet on **Wed., Dec. 14**, from 9–11:30 am, in the Sewing Room.
- The **Sewing Group** will meet on **Mon., Dec. 19**, from 2:30–6 pm, in the Room 78.

## Spiritual Life

*The Rev. Mary Lynn Callahan, Director of Spiritual Life Ministries*

### **Sat., Dec. 31: Year-End Examen** 9 am–12 pm

Before celebrating the New Year, join us in the Parlor for a guided meditation on the movement of God in your life during the past year. By exploring the flow of God in your life, it will become easier to experience the presence of God in this moment and the next—and the one after that. Please join us in this time of prayer, reflection, and listening. A light breakfast will be served.

### **Experience a Silent Retreat in January**

In the midst of winter, it is easier to see the beautiful and intricate pattern of the trees and, in the silence of retreat, it is easier to see the beautiful and intricate pattern of God's presence in our lives. Share the silence with others and begin to trace that pattern for yourself at a retreat from **Fri.–Sun., Jan. 20–22**.

The retreat will be held at the Martina Spiritual Renewal Center on the Northside. We will gather for dinner on Friday evening, and depart after brunch on Sunday.

Registration is required and includes an opportunity to meet with a spiritual director. The cost is **\$120** and scholarships are available. Registration forms are available on the SLC bulletin board and at **ELPC.church**.

## Presbyterian Women

*Sherry Anderson and Kelli Booher, Co-Moderators*

### **Sun., Dec. 4: Thank Offering to be Received**

This year, we will honor ELPC women by receiving the Presbyterian Women Thank Offering on **Sun., Dec. 4**. The Thank Offering supports programs that relieve pain, provide clean water, alleviate homelessness, provide educational opportunities, and lift up the lives of women and children throughout the world.

### **Bible Study: Who is Jesus?** *Second Floor Parlor*

**Mon., Dec. 5** 7 pm | **Tues., Dec. 6** 10 am

Join us as we explore our theme, *Who is Jesus according to John?* Childcare is available by request for the Tuesday study. A potluck lunch will follow the Tuesday Bible Study. Soup and beverages will be provided, but please bring a salad or snack to share, as well as travel-size toiletries as donations for Living in Liberty.

### **Living in Liberty, a Local Ministry to Trafficked Women**

Living in Liberty offers a secure safe house for victims of human sex trafficking and does outreach with victims on the streets, and at three care centers. Founded in 2012, Living in Liberty also educates the public about sex trafficking, as well as its prevalence worldwide and its presence in our communities.

This ministry is the 2016–17 mission project of PW in Pittsburgh Presbytery. Watch for opportunities to support this ministry. For more information, contact Mary Alice Lightle at **412.682.1504** or visit [LivingInLiberty.org](http://LivingInLiberty.org).

### **Diaper Drive Continues**

Diapers cost \$70-to-\$80 per month for one child. You can help by bringing diapers for the Western Pennsylvania Diaper Bank. Sizes 5 and 6 are most needed.

## At Recent Session Meetings:

- The Nominating Committee reported that they had completed their slate of nominations for vacant church officer positions beginning in 2017;
- A wonderful group of 14 new members and 6 friends was received, with another New Members Class expected in early December; and
- The Renovations Committee provided updates on the anticipated year-end completion date of project architectural drawings and a hoped-for January Session presentation to approve the project budget, scope, and contracts.

## LGBTQ Ministry

Wil Forrest, Coordinator of Young Adult and Outreach Programs



Join us as we support our friends in the Renaissance City Choir at their holiday concert at ELPC on **Sat., Dec. 10**, at 7:30 pm. Then, we will head out to share some holiday cheer together.

To learn more or to get involved in ELPC's LGBTQ Ministry, contact Wil at [Wil@coh.net](mailto:Wil@coh.net) or 412.441.3800 x14.

**God created you.  
God loves you.  
Be yourself.**

## A Season of Service

by Wil Forrest, Coordinator of Young Adult and Outreach Programs



Visit the iSERVE webpage at [ELPC.church/programs/iSERVE](http://ELPC.church/programs/iSERVE) to read about becoming a member of the weSERVE list and other service opportunities. Contact Wil Forrest at [Wil@coh.net](mailto:Wil@coh.net) or 412.441.3800 x14 to ask questions.

## ELPC People

If you have news to share, please call Gloria Knopp at 412.441.3800 x22.

### Good News

- Best wishes to those in our faith family who were married in November:
  - **Ashley Birt** and **Emily DeTar**
  - Best wishes to **Scott Eckes** and **Tony Richardson**
- Congratulations to those who were baptized in October:
  - **Grace Confer-Hammond**
  - **Marcus James Karns**, son of Jason & Julia Karns
  - **Lucia Ann Iona Slate**, daughter of Nico Slate & Emily Mohn-Slate
- Please welcome our 20 new members and friends who joined in October: **Harvey Adams, Jr.; Regina Anderson; Karen Bancroft; Yodit Betru; Alysha Carroll; Carol Chontos; Grace & Megan Confer-Hammond; Julianne & Michael Fallert; Gerald & Beth Fazio; Patricia Fountain; Misia Goodson; Nancy Heastings & Colleen Vermillion; Alan & Marilyn McIvor; Harold McDonald; and Tony Richardson.**
- **The Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy** was recognized and presented with an award at the 31<sup>st</sup> Annual *Black History Achievement Awards* banquet, sponsored by the Church of God in Christ in Western Pennsylvania.
- **Gloria Knopp** was recognized for her 25 years of membership in the Administrative Personnel Association of the PC(USA) at the 2016 National Conference of APA in Las Vegas.

### Prayers

We offer our prayers and condolences to the family and friends of those who recently passed away:

- Renee Clark's husband, Brent Clark
- Eric Kalsey's wife, Sandy Kalsey
- Natasha Williams' grandmother, Nadine Higgins
- Sharron Boddy's aunt
- Jonathan Brown's father, Captain Colin Brown



*“As a diverse community of believers, we strive to follow God—the Creator who calls us, Jesus who teaches us, and the Spirit who empowers us. We show God’s unconditional love by providing a refuge for spiritual growth, ardently pursuing justice, and extending Christ’s radical hospitality to all.”*

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## The Great Exchange: Music

On **Sun., Dec. 11**, at 12:30 pm, in the Music Room, folks of all ages are invited to this fun, interactive event where together—across the generations—we will explore some fun and intriguing discussion questions centered around the topic of music. We will enjoy a simple lunch while sharing our stories with one another. No preparation is necessary.



## Christmas in East Liberty

Please join us—and invite your friends and family—for a joyous performance in the ELPC Sanctuary on **Fri., Dec. 16**, at 7:30 pm. The Brass Roots return for another festive concert with the ELPC Chancel Choir and Dr. Ed Moore at the organ. This concert has become an East Liberty tradition and one of the most highly anticipated concerts of the season!

A freewill offering will be received.



## Building Closed

The ELPC office will be closed all day on **Mon.,–Tues., Dec. 26–27**, for Christmas, as well as on **Mon., Jan. 2**, for New Year’s.