Special thanks to the Journey music ministry team of Moses Cheeks, Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy, Rebecca Marquette, Ashok Nayak, Jack Phillips, and Suzanne Polak, and Rev. Heather Schoenewolf. Their talent and spirit help make the Journey worship such a positive part of our church life! We'll see you again this fall!

VCS: Catch the Spirit
June 22-26, from 9 am-3 pm, at ELPC

VCS is fast approaching! This year, children age 3-grade 5 will “Catch the Spirit” and learn about God’s guiding, inspiring, and empowering presence among us and throughout the church. Registration forms are available for participants and volunteers on the CE bulletin board (first floor) and on the CE table (second floor). Please sign up now to join in the fun this summer!

If you are unable to join us for VCS but would like to contribute to this important ministry, donation cards are available for those who want to contribute snacks or supplies to our VCS program. Call Pastor Heather at 412.411.3800 x21, for details.

“I had a moment where God's presence truly became known to me. I was on the Mission Trip last year to New York City...and we read a passage in the Bible. The general message of the passage was that whoever you are, whether slave or free, rich or poor, God will forgive you for your sins through Jesus Christ. Though this was a message I have been hearing for years it suddenly had a new meaning. I was thankful because if I did something wrong, I would be forgiven. The whole experience of knowing that God is real gave me a confidence in who I am and the confidence in living my life.”
- Camden Copeland
How should we pray to God? Should we pray humbly (Lord, if it’s not too much, I just want to ask…) or passionately (Great God, with all my heart please give me wisdom to do what is right and strength to avoid what is wrong…)? Should we use formal language (Almighty and most merciful Father, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift….), making sure we are as comprehensive as possible (Having offered words of praise and confession, I shall now present my prayers of intercession and supplication…)? Or, the $100 question, is it possible to pray “wrong?”

At its heart, prayer is a conversation that includes silence, trust, and hope. It’s not so much an act of talking to God as it’s an opening up of ourselves to God, not a public speaking recitation. Think of it more like entering a room where God is seated, or taking a walk beside Christ, or breathing in a deep, cleansing breath that includes the Holy Spirit. Think of it as a posture out of which words, thoughts, and concerns are humbly given voice.

Praying to God also involves silence, as we reflect on our words and create a space in which God can respond – through insights; inner peace; and yes, words we hear as we continue on through our day. Praying involves trust – the deep sense that we’re not alone and that the One who accompanies us truly wants what is best for us. The formula is this: Sincere prayer plus a spirit of trust always adds up to an attitude of persistent hope.

I don’t know if you can ever pray “wrong.” I know I’ve prayed for the wrong reasons; and at times I’ve prayed out of feelings of distraction, confusion, or obligation. There’ve even been prayers offered out of panic, usually involving a maliciously uncooperative home computer! However, God does not wait to listen to us until we can pray “right.” God is near, knows our needs before we ask, and is ever anxious to respond.

Prayer is also a discipline. So I wouldn’t worry that your prayer is being done poorly; rather find regular times to practice the art of praying and you’ll see how soon concerns about doing it “wrong” are invariably misplaced.

I’ll close with some quotes from prayers composed by animals (thanks to the creativity of poet Carmen Bernos de Gasztold). I appreciate their honesty and their simple wisdom. May they help enrich your own prayer life.

“A little patience, O God, I am coming.” – Prayer of the Tortoise

“Lord, I who see the world from above find it hard to get used to its pettiness.” – Prayer of the Giraffe

“Dear God, give me time. People are always so driven!” – Prayer of the Ox

“Lord, you try for a little while to walk on one foot carrying Your whole heaven on Your back.” – Prayer of the Snail

“Oh! What a worry! All these chicks to cherish and protect – can’t shut an eye even for a moment!” – Prayer of the Mother Hen

“Lord! Where was I? Oh yes! This flower, this sun, thank You! Your world is beautiful…Where was I? Oh yes! Lord, I had something to tell You: Amen.” – Prayer of the Butterfly
Session News

• The May meeting marked the start of the Session year, with new elders taking over their roles and responsibilities. Don Breitbarth was elected Session Clerk.

• The 2009 Confirmation Class joined the elders for dinner before being examined and approved to be received as members of ELPC.

• Session members were disappointed to hear that enough presbyteries voted in the negative to defeat the latest effort to revise G-6.0106b (poorly-worded “fidelity and chastity” requirements for ordination) in the Book of Order. However, the vote itself prompted positive “changes of heart” and faithful conversation.

Young at Heart Luncheon

Sun., June 7, following 11 am, Sanctuary Worship

Each year, the ELPC Deacons sponsor the Young At Heart Luncheon, which honors our Seniors with a time of fellowship, food, and entertainment. This year, our theme is Songs of Hope and Freedom, and features special guest Peter Yarrow, who leads us in some of the songs that inspired an earlier struggle for needed change.

Since high school, Peter Yarrow’s commitment and work have been directed by awareness that music of conscience can have an extraordinary effect when utilized in efforts to transform society. As a performer and social activist, he uses music to inspire a more just, peaceful, and compassionate society. The music of Peter, Paul and Mary became the genesis of activism, idealism and a life-long commitment to making positive social change.

Yarrow’s songwriting has produced some of Peter, Paul & Mary’s most moving songs, such as “Puff, The Magic Dragon,” “Day Is Done,” and “Light One Candle.” “Beyond our intellect, the inspiration of our spirit is essential”, says Yarrow. “And that is where music and the arts come in.”

For details, call Amanda Nolan, at 412.441.3800 x34!

Mission to Malawi

Peta Harrigan-Cole has been selected to go on Pittsburgh Presbytery’s Partnership Mission Trip to Malawi, from August 6-20. Her enthusiasm for the mission won over those who interviewed her.

The group will visit our sister church in Balaka and other areas of the Synod of Blantyre. Help celebrate this event by:

• Encouraging and praying for Peta as she prepares for this journey;
• Participating in the commissioning service on August 2 (location TBD);
• Seeing her off at the airport on August 6, at 7 am; and
• Making a financial contribution.

This will be a life-changing experience and we wish her well! For questions, call Kay Shissler, at 412.681.2047.

PrideFest: March and Festival

Sun., June 14; March at 12 pm, Festival from 1-6 pm

PrideFest is a day-long celebration of GLBT Pride in Pittsburgh. ELPC joins other churches, faith groups and non-church groups, all supporting diversity and inclusivity in the Pride Awareness March. We march through downtown, beginning at the intersection of Grant St. and Blvd. of the Allies, and ending at Liberty and 7th St. We wear our ELPC t-shirts (available in the bookstore) and walk as a group to witness God’s amazing love and open arms. ELPC provides transportation to the march site and festival.

Liberty Ave., between 9th St. & 7th Ave., will be closed to traffic. Among dozens of vendors, ELPC will have a booth staffed by church members, who’ll hand out literature about our worship services and mission activities, and will talk about ELPC and what it means to us. There’ll also be: food vendors; two stages with entertainment; and a family-friendly area with carnival games.

We encourage you to participate in any or all of the activities. To sign up for the march or to work a shift at the booth, call Carol Untch, at 724.272.9722. Sign up sheets also are available during the fellowship time after Sanctuary Worship. For information on PrideFest and other activities, visit http://pittsburghpride.org.

“Jesus’ life was a reinstatement of God’s glory and generosity to the people. Jesus’ death was a symbol to allow God to forgive us, “for we do not know what we are doing.” Jesus’ resurrection was a key to allow the people of God to go to God’s kingdom.”

- Erich Harkema
Christian Education in June
Rev. Heather Schoenewolf, Associate Pastor for Educational Ministries

CONTEMPORARIES CLASS Facilitators: Joe Kennedy and Mary Alice Lightle
June 7: Stories and Experiences, led by the Rev. Miriam Chamberlain
Miriam has experienced a tapestry of spiritual events which have served to define and nurture her ministry. Our congregation benefits from her gifts through visitation and outreach. Her faith stories can serve as bonding agents to foster our collective well-being, and help strengthen us during times of challenge. Get to know one of our staff members on a deeper level!

June 14: The Visitation Ministry, led by the Rev. Miriam Chamberlain
Join in a panel discussion on how the Visitation Ministry provides for each of us.
• It renders service or aid to enhance the physical or spiritual well-being of others.
• It’s a means of demonstrating sympathy and service toward another person.
• It’s an outward attempt to display the qualities of love, mercy, compassion, understanding and forgiveness to others.
• It acknowledges the qualities exhibited by Jesus Christ in His numerous encounters with the plight of individuals.
• It means giving yourself, talents, resources, and time in a Christian manner.

June 21-July 26: Multitude of Blessings, led by Joe Kennedy and Mary Alice Lightle
Join us in the Parlor (second floor) from 9:15-9:50 am, for a six-week summer session around Dr. Cynthia M. Campbell’s book, “A Multitude of Blessings.” How do Christians who trust in God and follow Jesus Christ in their daily lives, who believe that religious beliefs really do “matter,” and who want to treat people of all religious backgrounds with respect, account for the existence and vitality of the world’s religions? A noted Christian scholar put it this way: “How does one account theologically for the fact of humanity’s religious diversity? We explain the fact that the Milky Way is there by the doctrine of creation, but how do we explain the fact that the Bhagavad Gita is there?” We’ll explore these questions.
• June 21: Is This “My Father’s” World or Not?
• June 28: Many Faiths…One Family

JOURNEY WITH SCRIPTURE Facilitator: Jan Irvin
June 7: Isa. 6:1-8; Ps. 29; Rom. 8:12-17; John 3:1-17
June 14: I Sam. 15:34-16:13 or Ezek. 1:22-24; Ps. 20 or Ps. 92:1-4, 12-15; II Cor. 5:6-17; Mark 4:26-34

PARENTING CIRCLE Facilitators: Frances Irvin and Anne Jackson
June 7, 14: Three Cups of Tea; Ideas for the Fall
We’ll finish discussing the inspirational book “Three Cups of Tea,” describing the story of Greg Mortenson and his mission to build schools in the mountains of Pakistan and Afghanistan. We’ll draw out themes that relate to our family life.
We’ll also brainstorm ideas for the fall.

SEEKERS Facilitators: Seekers Steering Committee
June 7: To Be Determined, facilitated by the Rev. Heather Schoenewolf
June 14: Review the Year’s Activities and Plan for Next Year

"I believe God is always with us: during hardship, during laughter, during decisions, during rest, and during new experiences. Sometimes you just have to notice, but he is a never ending presence...I think we are not meant to judge but to forgive. I believe in the mercy and compassion of God."
- Talora Martin
Youth and Young Adult Events

Rev. Heather Schoenewolf, Associate Pastor for Educational Ministries

YOUTH MINISTRIES

Thank you to the volunteers who helped to make our Wednesday evening youth program possible. We're grateful for our youth group leaders and volunteers: Ashley Birt, Brian Diebold, Tim and Maria Engelhardt, Bill Johnson, Carolyn Russ, and Anthony Williams. We also would like to thank those who donated meals for our group on Wednesday evenings: Sherry Anderson, Nadine Banks, Damon Bethea, Sharon Brit, Carol Kirkpatrick, Judy Menk, Joyce and Melanee Reese, Carolyn Russ, Jane and Bob Sampson, Kay Shissler, and Lora Turner.

June 13-14: 30 Hour Famine
ELPC youth in grades 6-12 will participate in our annual 30-Hour Famine from June 13-14. We’ll begin our fast after breakfast on Saturday morning, and then meet at 3 pm, at ELPC, to begin our activities. During an overnight lock-in, we’ll learn about the needs of those who are hungry—particularly those in Haiti—and will spend time in service to others, worship, and fun games. We’ll fast in order to raise money and awareness about the needs of those who are hungry, and will only drink water and juice during our time together. We’ll break our fast with Communion on Sunday during the 8:45 am, Journey service, and enjoy a hot breakfast following worship. A permission slip is required.

YOUNG ADULT MINISTRIES

Those in their 20’s and 30’s are invited to join our warm and dynamic group for faith and fellowship! Visit us on MySpace, and find us on Facebook as well!

June 14: Young Adults Go Green! Mission Service Opportunity
Join us as the group works to upgrade and promote ELPC’s recycling program! We’ll place bins throughout the church for plastics and glass, and work on effective signs for their use. There’ll be a job for everyone! We’ll meet in the Parlor (second floor), at 4 pm.

June 30: Pirates Game
The Young Adults group will be going out for an evening of baseball, pierogi races, and that great ballpark atmosphere as the Pittsburgh Pirates take on the Chicago Cubs at PNC Park. Meet at ELPC at 5:45pm. Tickets cost $15. RSVP to Brian no later than Tues., June 16!

Aspiring Musician

Bethan Neely, a Hope Academy student, has been busy the past several weeks performing for a variety of audiences. Recently, she played the preludes and postlude at ELPC worship, and played three organ compositions for the monthly meeting of the Pittsburgh Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. Bethan also competed as a scholarship winner and contestant for the Pittsburgh Organ Academy auditions, held at Southminster Presbyterian Church. Bethan takes weekly organ lessons with Dr. Szeremany, and studies piano with JoAnn Wagstaff, in addition to studying the oboe and English horn. She recently placed third in the Lois Smith/Lois Streader Pittsburgh piano competition, and has been accepted for the Oberlin Conservatory one-week Summer Academy for High School Organists, in Oberlin, Ohio. Congratulations, Bethan!
Calling All Graduates
ELPC would like to celebrate the accomplishments of those in our faith family who have completed High School or any Post-Secondary Education (college, trade school, etc.). Let us know if you or a family member have celebrated a graduation this spring. Email the name, degree, and institution attended to Gloria Knopp, at gloriak@coh.net, by July 1.

"God and ELPC are two very important things to me. God hasn’t always been someone I understood. ELPC and its members have helped me realize who God is and what He does. To me, God is accepting of everyone even though not everyone is accepting of God."
- Madie Massey

Classes After Taizé Prayer
The Rev. Christiane Dutton, Minister of Taizé Prayer
Note: Classes begin at 8:15 pm.

June 3: Tower Sing
Climb the church tower with us and sing into the evening! We’ll sing Taizé chants, rounds, hymns and folk songs!

June 10: Flute Meditations on the Labyrinth, led by Charles Anderson
June 17: Sacred Harp/Shape Note Singing, led by Charles Anderson
Enjoy singing from the oldest American tune book in print. Beginners welcome!

June 24: Celebrations!
Do you celebrate a birthday, milestone or anniversary in June? Write it down and put it in the collection plate! We’d like to celebrate with you!

Spiritual Life
Dr. Lois M. Lang, Associate in Ministry for Spiritual Life

Live H2O Pittsburgh
Sun., June 21, from 4:30-6 pm, is a global event to bless the sacred water of the Earth. Join us in the blessing of water through prayer, music and a labyrinth walk closing ceremony. Call Judy, at 412.571.1223, for details.

Let’s Get Ready for Christmas!
We are excited about our 2009 Christmas project, a Chrismon tree!. We’ll decorate it with ornaments made by interested members and friends of ELPC. The symbols used represent a variety of biblical and theological concepts that are well known among most believers. Chrismon ornaments are white and gold, decorated with beads, ribbon, glitter, etc. Common examples include crowns, crosses, doves, stars, and butterflies.

We are organizing those who are interested based on types of ornaments:
- Counted cross-stitch symbols (2 ¼ X 2 ¼ inches)
- Three-dimensional wire and bead designs

Materials will be supplied and classes will be offered. Anyone interested should call 412.441.3800 and speak with Kate Carlson, at x17, or Lois Lang, at x41.

Health Ministry
The Rev. Patrice L. Fowler-Searcy, Staff Representative

Tuesday Tai Chi
Join us in the Sewing room on June 2, 9, and 16, from 10-11 am, and 6-7 pm. We request a donation of $3/class. Call Amanda Nolan, at 412.441.3800 x34.

"The church is a place where all people can come and be safe and loved, and where they can hear about God and choose to believe in God if they can. Being a member of the church is important to me because I feel like I belong to a place that I love and where love is."
- Sophie Klancher
**Housing Ministry**

*Emily Rosenthal, Chair of the Neighbors Mission Committee*

**Ministry Volunteer Opportunity**

The Neighbors Mission Committee would like to thank the 30 ELPC members who volunteered for the housing ministry's work days on March 7, and April 6. All are welcome to join us on Sat., June 6, as we do repair and landscape work at the homes of families under the care of Open Hands Ministry. Call Emily Rosenthal, at 412.963.0139, or Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy, at 412.441.3800 x30.

**Providence Experienced in Abandoned House, by Emily Rosenthal, ELPC Elder**

ELPC’s Housing Ministry can involve many things, but mostly, our ministry is about being in grace-filled relationships with our neighbors and God.

In March, 20 ELPC ministry volunteers joined other churches for an OHM work day, where we cleaned out an abandoned house for potential buyers. At first glance, it looked like a dump: holes in the walls where people tried to steal copper pipes, broken glass, etc. As we worked, it became obvious that this house had indeed been a home. In a bedroom closet, a ceramic cross and portable communion sets were uncovered. In the garage, a hand-painted sign proclaimed the “Open Door Church.”

Living room bookcases contained schoolwork, hymnals, books of theology, and photos. I saw names and photos of family members that were taken in the very spot I was standing. Each discovery told a piece of a family’s story.

As we marveled at the life that once filled this house, a middle-aged woman walked through the front door and said, “I used to live here.” I recalled a name written in one of the children’s books, and unthinkingly asked, “Are you Sheron?” The startled woman replied, “Yes.”

Sheron grew up in that house; her parents were ministers, as is she. She currently lives in a different part of Pittsburgh, and rarely drives by her old house. However, when she woke up that day, she felt pulled there. We agreed that God was telling her to stop by to gather the belongings and to complete the story of an abandoned house for a group of surprised, humbled volunteers. It was an amazing day!

**EECM**

**Summer Food Drive**

During summer, families of children who qualify for school breakfast and lunch programs face the additional cost of providing these meals on limited budgets. The Poverty Committee and the EECM pantry manager ask that we focus our summer offerings on items that can help the pantry provide lunch for children, such as:

- Juice Boxes
- Applesauce
- Graham Crackers
- Fruit Snacks (raisins or other dried fruit)

Please consider bringing any of these items as your Food of the Month donation for June, July, and August. Donations may be dropped off in the hallway baskets.

**Men’s Shelter**

While the need has remained consistent, donations have declined. We need your help! Requested items for June include **plain white and colored t-shirts sizes M-XXL**. Please drop donations in the Highland Ave. hallway basket.

**ELPC People**

**Good News**

- Chad and Sarah Stacy are the proud parents of a baby girl, **Marian Stacy**.
- Patricia McClung is the proud parent of a baby boy, **Christian McClung**.
- Congratulations to Damon and Lora (Turner) Bethea on their marriage.
- Congratulations to our new members who joined in May.

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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.”

ELPC’s Newest Members

Congratulations to the youth who joined ELPC on Confirmation Sunday.

Each new member wrote a Statement of Faith, expressing their belief in God and their understanding of how God is at work in their lives. Excerpts are scattered throughout Reaching Out.

Photo from a Confirmation Retreat: (left-to-right) Josh Lawrence, Sophie Klancher, Pastor Heather, Erich Harkema, Ben Engelhardt, Madie Massey, Camden Copeland, Talora Martin, and Brian Diebold.

"I don't know much about God but I do know He exists. My faith is like a solar system. At the center is a core belief in God which is orbited by many little questions. Like planets, they are formed and pulled in by the power of the core…I also know that God created everything because the world is adorned twice over by miracles."

- Ben Engelhardt