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 volunteer 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.

Randall Bush
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.

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!

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.
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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 Edgecombe; 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 Olvis; 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.
“...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.

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.