Winter Rally Day is Here

Epiphany is a season of light, new beginnings, and discovery into which we are invited as we draw near to the Christ Child. On Sun., Jan. 6, we celebrate Epiphany, remembering the joy of the Magi, the dedication of their following, the generosity of their gifts.

We will begin our celebration together in the Social Hall, as persons of all ages are invited to explore the meaning of this day during an Intergenerational Church School Hour, from 9:45–10:45 am. There will be something for everyone! Various learning stations will allow you to explore this story of our faith, and the activities featured here will be a part of our 11 am Worship Service. We will share a light breakfast together as well. The Christian Education Committee will provide fruit and beverages, and the congregation is asked to bring breakfast breads to share.

New Beginnings  by Leah Marmo and Ben Rainey

Leah: The year 2013 marks the end of my 20-year journey as an Academic Student…and I am frightened. I tremble at the thought of not having a schedule to follow, plans to fulfill, a well-paved path lit with florescent lights to guide me. Yet through this anxiety comes a stillness that beckons me to remember. To remember the years that have passed, how each chapter of my life was but a reflection of the One who is holding the pen. It is by looking back that I am able to move forward, slowly, on an uncharted path, holding the hand of the One who guides me.

Ben: I face the new year with a form of the Serenity Prayer. What in this ever-arriving future is up to me? What is up to God? I pray to discern between the two. The control freak in me panics at the large blank unknown and wants to draw up my own future in my mind, like a scriptwriter. Here are the ups and downs I’ll have, here are the insights I’ll be left with, here’s how I’ll be a better person because of it all. But could I have pre-planned this past year? Real growth seems to come as a gift, given quietly and often only seen in retrospect.
Pastoral Message

The Rev. Dr. Randall K. Bush, Pastor

I’m notorious for tearing out pages from magazines or circling paragraphs in newspaper articles when they contain quotes I find thought-provoking. Something in print can trigger a reaction in me that makes me pause, put down the paper for a moment, and reflect on what I’ve read. I may agree and want to shout, “Amen, sister!” I may disagree and want to say, “Now hold on there…”

T.C. Boyle is a popular fiction writer, who has published over twenty, fairly unconventional books. In a recent interview, he happened to be asked about life and death and offered this grim assessment: “In previous generations, there was purpose [to life]: you had to die, but there was God, and literature and culture would go on. Now, of course, there is no God, and our species is imminently doomed, so there is no purpose. We get up, raise families, have bank accounts, fix our teeth and everything else. But really, there is utterly no purpose except to be alive.” As you can imagine, my reaction was, “Now hold on there!”

Mr. Boyle has made a living out of being provocative, so his words have to be seen in light of his own goals of self-marketing. Clearly he and I disagree on the question of “God vs. no God.” But what struck me most was his suggestion that life has no ultimate purpose. I felt sad when he suggested that life involves waking up, balancing our checkbooks, brushing our teeth, and simply staying alive. What a narrow, depressing view! I thought of so many other things that I would add to the list of “why I wake up in the morning”, including (but not limited to) my wife and family, communion services at ELPC, Bach and Chopin music on the piano, snow-capped mountains seen from a distance, ocean beaches felt by bare feet, children, pets, chocolate, crossword puzzles, and ice cream “blend ins.”

You would likely have your own list of what brings you joy each day and adds meaning to your life.

Having said that, I know that for all of us some days (and weeks) are harder than others. There are stages in life when it takes all our effort to get up, get to work, pay our bills, and navigate the hours until we can lie down in bed again. There are times when we cannot see distant mountains or remember what summer’s warmth feels like, and we find ourselves just “staying alive.” The difference is that Mr. Boyle cynically suggests that there is no other option—no “Plan B” to turn to when things are hard. I would argue that a “horizon is nothing except the limit of our sight” (to borrow words from our state’s founder William Penn), and as God’s children, we always have another higher, spiritual horizon ever before us. Christ has promised to be with us, “even to the end of the age.” The Spirit intercedes for us “with sighs too deep for words” in our moments of need. Remembering those basic truths of faith lifts our eyes unto the hills, allowing us to affirm: “From whence does our help come? It comes from the Lord.”

Continued on page 3
Drinking from the Well of Generosity

by Michele Bossers

We live in an “instant” society where the shelf life of an idea, story, or item is brief. Too often, we live only in the present moment without regard for the lessons of the past or plans for the future. Unfortunately, we risk much if we do not learn from previous generations.

At ELPC, we are blessed by the generosity of those who have come before us. Through their gifts, our church serves as a cathedral of hope for current members, friends in the neighborhood and throughout the world. We drink from the well of riches that they have established through gifts both large and small. As current recipients of this bounty, it is our blessing and privilege to tend to this well for future generations.

Preparing an estate plan is good Christian stewardship, which keeps the well from running dry. The Finance Committee is establishing a “Planned Giving Program” for our church. Planned Giving encourages a one-time or recurring gifts, as well as individual estate planning. The Planned Giving Team is working with the Session and staff to initiate a strategic effort encouraging congregational support and participation. Our well shall not run dry for future generations!

“I will pour water on the thirsty land and water on the dry ground; I will pour out my spirit upon your offspring and my blessing on your descendants.” (Isaiah 4:33)

Reflections from the Border Part 2 of 3

The day we arrived in Agua Prieta, Sonora, Mexico, the Café Justo Roasting Plant was having its 10th anniversary celebration. We met with those who grow and sell the rich, fair trade plus coffee we enjoy at ELPC. They were 2,000 miles away from their homes in Chiapas, near the Guatemalan border, while we were 2,000 miles from Pittsburgh. Yet God joined us together in the desert...and we were blessed.

The blessings of the Café Justo cooperative are profound, not only providing a higher standard of living for the growers and their families, but also their communities. We rejoice in the lives changed by Frontera de Cristo (FDC) and those who purchase this brew. Each cup brings a brighter tomorrow for the people of Chiapas.

We also visited the children and leaders at CAINA—a before- and after-school ministry offered by Lorena Rodolfo, whose husband is the pastor at Iglesia Presbiteriana Lirio de los Valles. Lorena began this program with no resources, just a vision and a mission.

Children in Agua Prieta attend either morning or afternoon schooling. And because child care is not available, Sister Lorena meets the needs of working families. With few materials, CAINA operates on the grace of volunteers and support from FDC.

ELPC will designate this year's Children's Sabbath offering for CAINA, which will help buy supplies and equipment. CAINA also will develop a website which may provide an opportunity for the ELPC and CAINA children to be cyberspace pen pals.

Stay tuned!
Christian Education
The Rev. Heather Schoenewolf
Associate Pastor for Educational Ministries

Contemporaries Class  Second Floor Parlor
Facilitators: Joe Kennedy and Mary Alice Lightle
Protestantism in America is becoming increasingly factionalized, and according to some estimates, there are over 30,000 denominations. In an increasingly competitive religious market, it has become common to appeal to early church models of worship and organization for approval and legitimation. In this session, we will explore the theological groundings and implications of this appeal. We will examine the early church as evidenced in the New Testament, and think critically about what the worship of our past brothers and sisters in Christ means for us today.

Jan. 20 and 27: Christianity in Aotearoa  Led by Rev. Dr. Randy Bush
Pastor Randy will present on the early missionary activity that brought Christianity to New Zealand/Aotearoa. We will see how the church had both a positive and negative influence on the Maori people, and also discuss how far-reaching change follows whenever the Bible is translated into indigenous languages.

Journey with Scripture  Second Floor Library
Facilitator: Jan Irvin
“To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good” 1 Cor. 12:7. The “common good” is a timely topic! The season of Epiphany speaks to the emergence of the Commonwealth of God in Christ—the sheer light and transparency of it all. Join us this month as we read Hebrew and New Testament scriptures together.

Jan. 27: Nehemiah 8:1–3, 5–6, 8–10; Psalms 19; I Corinthians 12:12–31a; Luke 4:14–21

Parenting Circle  Harambe Room
Facilitator: Pam Walaski
We will take a Sabbatical this spring, and use this time to explore how to best minister to parents—both within and outside of the Church School hour.
Jan. 13: Sharing of Joys and Concerns
We will share our joys and concerns, and discuss possibilities moving forward. If you would like to share ideas, contact Pam at pam@jcsafety.com or Pastor Heather.

Seekers  Room 234; Facilitator: Gwen Puza
Jan. 13: The Murals of St. Nicholas Church
St. Nicholas Catholic Church, Millvale, Pa., was built in in 1900, for the Croatian immigrants who came to America to work in the steel mills and mines. The beautiful murals use religious symbolism to tell the story of the immigrants, their daily lives, and how they were affected by war. Come see the wonderful murals and the details of their symbolism.

Jan. 20 and 27: Combined with Contemporaries Class

Soul Food  Pastor’s Conference Room
Facilitator: Joe Hajdu
Jan. 13, 20, and 27: Topic to be Determined
Reading material and discussion topics to be announced. Please consult the Sunday bulletins and the ELPC News Flash for more information, or contact Joe Hajdu at hajdu625@comcast.net.

Youth Classes
Junior High (grades 6–8)  Room 341
Curriculum: “Feasting on the Word”

Senior High (grades 9–12)  Room 343
Curriculum: “We Believe”

Children’s Classes
Young Children’s Ministry/Infants–age 2  Nursery
Curriculum: “Wee Children at Church”

Pre-school/Ages 3–5  Room 240
Curriculum: “Gospel Light”

Kindergarten and Grade 1  Room 336
Curriculum: “Godly Play”

Grades 2–3  Room 338
Curriculum: “Godly Play”

Grades 4–5  Room 335
Curriculum: “Seasons of the Spirit”

We rejoice that ELPC provides educational offerings for all ages. For a full listing of classes and descriptions, please see the CE bulletin boards or visit www.CathedralOfHope.org. Classes begin at 9:45 am.
Hope Academy of Music and the Arts
Linda Addlespurger, Director

Winter Term Begins
Hope Academy starts back up on Sat., Jan. 5, for the 295 youth who participate in our classes and private lessons. New this term is Sing Together with Michael and Alcira Chapman for children ages 3 and 4. Musical Theater students will prepare for the Pittsburgh Public Theater’s Shakespeare Monologue and Scene Contest.

Spots fill quickly, so if you haven’t registered, call 412.41.3800 x11. Download and print a full course brochure and registration form at www.HopeAcademy.info.

Youth Ministry
Sara Hackett, Coordinator for Christian Education and Youth Ministry

Note: For more information on activities for youth and tweens (grades 4–6) or to be added to our mailing list, please call Gloria Knopp at 412.441.3800 x22.

Sun., Jan. 13: Ice Skating at Schenley
Tweeners, Junior High, and Senior High youth are invited to go ice skating at Schenley Ice Skating Rink. We will meet for a pizza lunch in Room 61 after the 11 am Worship Service. Then, we will depart for the skating rink. Parents should plan to pick up their children from ELPC at 4 pm.

The cost for this trip is $5, and a permission slip is required. RSVP with Sara Hackett at 412.673.2926 or SaraH@coh.net, or Anthony Williams at 412.292.7933 by Sun., Jan. 6.

Young Adult Ministry
Wil Forrest, Coordinator

Fri., Jan. 4: First Friday at EECM Shelter at 7 pm
Share in a service opportunity sure to feed body and soul. Email wil@coh.net before Mon., Dec. 24, to sign up to bring something to feed the 40 men in the EECM homeless shelter housed at ELPC. We will prep at 7 pm, and serve at 8 pm.

Sun., Jan. 20: Sunday YAM Class from 9:45–10:45 am, in Room 244
We will begin our spring-long focus on what happens after we die, as we discuss writer Rob Bell’s recent tome, entitled Love Wins. See Wil to get a copy (pay what you can of the $10 cost) and read the entire book prior to the class. We will reflect upon it primarily during this time, but also during later book discussion times. Café Justo will be served, and childcare will be available.

Fri., Jan. 25–27: Camp Crestfield Retreat
Our annual retreat to Crestfield will take a few new twists this year. We will stay in the new cottages for two nights. Our focus will be on our relationship with God. We will leave ELPC at 7 pm, on Friday, and return around 2 pm, on Sunday. The cost is $50, which includes everything. Limited scholarships are available.

Reaching Out • January 2013
Presbyterian Women
Mary Alice Lightle, Moderator

Tues., Jan. 8: Dispatches to God’s Household at 10 am
Join us in the Second Floor Parlor as Michele Bossers leads our lesson, The Tie That Binds, based on 1 Peter 3. A potluck lunch follows. Please bring a salad or snack to share and your own place setting. Beverages and soup are provided.

Note: We are meeting on the second Tuesday in January due to the holidays.

Save the Date: Spring Retreat to Camp Crestfield
All women of ELPC are invited to an overnight retreat at Camp Crestfield from Fri., May 17–18, with Rev. Mary Lynn Callahan. We will gather Friday evening and return Saturday evening.
Watch the bulletin board outside the Library for details. Partial scholarships are available.

Pilgrimage to Taizé
We are planning a trip to Taizé in September. If you are interested in this trip, contact the Rev. Christiane Dutton ChristianeD@coh.net or 412.441.3800 x42.

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

Fri., Jan. 11–13: Silent Retreat
Come away for a time of silence, peace, and restoration at the Martina Spiritual Life Center (located just off I-279 at Perrysville Ave.). Taking time to slow down, listen, reflect, and savor the presence of the divine is essential to maturing spiritually. Allow your thoughts and body to become quiet so you can become more aware of the presence of the living God within and around you. If you have never experienced a silent retreat, this is an opportunity to give it a try.

Individual spiritual direction appointments with Rev. Callahan will be offered (optional) at registration.

The cost is $150, which includes two nights accommodations, meals, and a spiritual direction appointment.

For more information or to request a scholarship, contact the Rev. Callahan.

Sun., Feb. 3: Exploring the Connection Between Mission and Spirituality
What do you think of when you hear the word “spirituality?” Hooded monks chanting psalms in a monastery? Individuals going on retreats in silence and solitude? While these possibilities may provide a limited image of what spirituality is, they do include elements of one aspect of spirituality—the journey inward. It is a journey that is traversed by some silence, Scripture reading, and a bit of solitude. It is an inward journey that nourishes and strengthens our spirits, heals and transforms our brokenness into wholeness, and gives us insight into who we are created to be and where God is inviting us to serve. But, while these aspects of the journey are critical, they are not an end in themselves. The inward journey is a journey of preparation which equips us for the other half of the journey—the outward journey of engagement, which leads us into the world in love, compassion, justice, and social witness. Either side of the journey by itself is incomplete.

Judy Menk has a long relationship with ELPC, spirituality, and mission. She served here as Director of Christian Education from 1986–2000 and has been on the ELPC Poverty Committee and the committee advocating for the Issues of Women and Children. Currently, Judy is an active elder on the ELPC Session, chair of the Personnel Committee, and a Sunday School Teacher.

Our faith calls us to live our life in an ongoing rhythm of journeying inward that equips us to journey outward, which in turn, enriches and informs the journey inward. Join ELPC elder Judy Menk as she guides us through an exploration of this life-giving and self-giving, twofold journey! A light lunch will be provided.
**Zero in on Solitary Confinement**

The United States is a world leader in holding prisoners in prolonged solitary confinement—in small cells for up to 23 hours a day. Some prisoners spend months, years, and even decades in these isolated conditions, and can experience long-term mental harm as a result. Many studies document the detrimental psychological effects of solitary confinement, such as hallucinations, paranoia, panic attacks, and suicide. The National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT) equates “prolonged solitary confinement” with torture—the point at which severe mental and physical pain or suffering results. Historically, Pennsylvania has been at the forefront of using solitary confinement and continues to experiment with new forms of isolation at the nearby State Correctional Institution at Cresson.

On **Sun., Jan. 20**, following our 11 am worship, the Justice Committee will provide an overview of a typical jail cell and information about solitary confinement. The Justice Committee also will be collecting 100 signatures for a petition to end solitary confinement, headed by NRCAT.

The next Justice Committee meeting is on **Sun., Jan. 13**, following our 11 Worship Service, in Room 224. For more information, call Carol Chonoska at 724.272.9722 or email carolchonoska@gmail.com.

---

**Time to Quit Serving?** by Wil Forrest, iSERVE Coordinator

This time of year, many folks examine their lives and reset their priorities. As you examine your life, you may find yourself thinking about a service commitment you have made at ELPC or elsewhere. Does the responsibility still fit into your life? Does it edify you? Does it use your God-given gifts? Do you still enjoy it?

The author of Ecclesiastes writes that there is a time to every purpose under Heaven. There is a time to serve, and, I offer to you, there is a time to quit. Okay, quitting has a less than positive connotation to most of us, so think of it as moving on or redirecting your talents. Review your commitments to see if there is still a fit. Could you or the task be better served by stepping aside so someone else can take it on? Ask yourself if you still enjoy it. Think about what might be next.

So talk with a committee chair or staff member about your current commitment, and discuss if you still feel a fit or if something else is calling you. Is it time to use your gifts and take on new challenges and ways to serve God? Remember that serving at any one task in the church should not be a life sentence!

Visit [www.CathedralOfHope.org/about/iSERVE.html](http://www.CathedralOfHope.org/about/iSERVE.html) to print an iSERVE Time and Talent Interest Inventory sheet and read about becoming a member of the WeSERVE list!

---

**Health Ministry**

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

**Tai Chi**

Tuesdays, beginning Jan. 8, from 10–11 am and 6–7 pm

The cost of this class is $3 per session ($25 for 10 sessions). Please pre-register with Kate Carlson at katec@coh.net or 412.441.3800 x16.

**Yoga**

Thursdays, from 7:15–8:45 pm

A donation to the instructor is appreciated.

**JourneyDance**

Fri., Jan. 11, from 7–8 pm

A donation from the heart is appreciated.
MLK, Jr. Celebrations

On Sun., Jan. 20, ELPC is proud to host the 2013 Kelso Lecture in honor of Martin L. King, Jr. offered cooperatively by East End Cooperative Ministry and Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. Music begins at 3:30 pm, with the program at 4 pm, in the Sanctuary.

The keynote speaker will be nationally-known civil rights attorney John C. Brittain, Professor of Law at the Univ. of the District of Columbia. There also will be readings from Dr. King’s speeches and writings; musical performances by Hope Academy, The Neighborhood Academy Drummers, Community Day School and the Missionary Temple; and the Rodman Street Missionary Baptist Church Men’s Choir. The program will conclude with a time for questions and a cookie reception.

Those attending are encouraged to bring canned or non-perishable food donations to support the EECM food pantry.

There will be another celebration from 12–4 pm, on Mon., Jan. 21, at the Kelly-Strayhorn Theater. The family-focused day includes social justice organizations filling the lobby with projects, and stage performances from Hope Academy and other community groups.

Take part in these events so that we may share King’s dream, faith, hope and love.

Voices in Concert

The ELPC Chancel Choir section leaders will present an eclectic program of solo and ensemble works at 4 pm, on Sun., Jan. 27, in the Chapel.

Please invite your friends to join us for this delightful afternoon of music from this talented group of musicians! A freewill offering will be accepted.

Building Closed: The ELPC office will be closed all day on Tues., Jan. 1, for New Year’s Day, and on Mon., Jan. 21, until 7 pm, in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s birthday.