Stewardship: Faith in Action

Every year, the ELPC congregation is encouraged to financially support our church’s ministries by submitting a pledge as part of our Stewardship Campaign. These tithes and commitments help us establish the coming year’s budget and ensure that we are living out our faith through the sharing of resources to support mission work, pastoral ministry, spiritual growth and educational opportunities for all. The theme for this year’s campaign is Faith in Action, guided by the words of James 1:25—“Be not hearers who forget but doers who act.” However, the Stewardship Committee will be doing things a bit differently this year.

First, the campaign itself will be shorter. Kicking off on Sun., Sept. 27, we will offer a few minutes for mission in worship and then send all of our congregation friends and members a letter and pledge card by mid-October. Second, everyone will be invited to bring their completed pledge cards to worship on Stewardship Sunday, Oct. 25. Third, it is the hope of the committee that people will maintain or slightly increase their current financial giving to the church so that we can continue to support the ministries of ELPC. Yet, we are mindful that the congregation will be asked to consider an additional pledge for the Building Our Future capital campaign later this year (November/December). While these are two separate requests—and both are vitally important to our church—our hope is that people can truly put their faith in action and find ways to pledge for both our ongoing budget and future needs.

As our congregation prepares for our 200th anniversary in 2019, now is the season to be “doers who act.” Please join us for the Stewardship Sunday celebration on Sun., Oct. 25!

Celebrate Love and Marriage Equality

ELPC members and friends are invited to renew marriage vows with their beloved or be a witness as our church family celebrates love and marriage equality together on Fri., Oct. 23. A renewal of marriage vows ceremony will be held in the Sanctuary at 7:30 pm, with a reception to immediately follow in Social Hall and Courtyard.

More details are available at ELPC.church. All are invited to celebrate!
Pastoral Message
The Rev. Dr. Randall K. Bush, Pastor

Our focus around ELPC this month is about mission, as a quick scan of the articles in this newsletter will verify. Mission trips and World Communion, East Liberty redevelopment and Malawi partnership churches, peace poles and prison ministries—all are expressions of our understanding that the gospel of Jesus Christ sends us out as mission workers in the Lord’s diverse “harvest fields.”

Yet even as the concept of “mission worker” implies some sort of activity that takes us out into the world, there is another key aspect to this type of ministry. Our ELPC mission statement appropriately contains the words “radical hospitality.” That phrase reminds us that mission is both what we do when we go out to others as well as how we treat those whom the Lord sends to us.

The recent events in Europe involving thousands of people fleeing violence in the Middle East and seeking refuge in other countries is a timely reminder of the “bi-directional” nature of Christian mission. Yes, we can send funds to relief agencies that provide needed support for people displaced due to political unrest and war. But we should also consider how we can respond to these same needs as they manifest themselves much closer to home. Pittsburgh has a program that gives international artists asylum (City of Asylum), has scores of international students that struggle to settle into our local colleges, and has countless families having to navigate overburdened aid programs’ limited resources for non-resident guests in our city. There are always ways we can do more as individuals and as a faith community to live out our call to “radical hospitality.”

One helpful way to think about this challenge is to remember that America is not a nation of immigrants, but rather a nation of refugees. The people who founded our nation and arrived on our shores were much more “huddled masses” than self-sufficient entrepreneurs exploring a new business setting. Coming to a new land, whether in the 18th, 19th, 20th, or 21st centuries, involves cultural losses, emotional trauma, and incredible personal upheaval. (I recognize that the previous categories are huge understatements if we consider what slaves endured on the horrific Middle Voyage to the states.) Whenever we think of our ancestors’ journeys to America, and if we view them with sympathy and admiration for their steely determination, we need to extend the same sentiment to the refugees (not immigrants) frantically seeking their own path to a new life.

Our faith tradition is replete with examples of refugees—from Abraham and Sarah and the early Hebrew people to Ruth leaving her home in Moab and on to Mary, Joseph and Jesus fleeing persecution at home to settle in Egypt. May we prayerfully and actively serve as “mission workers,” both through deeds done far from home and radical hospitality shown close nearby.

Randy Bush
Notes from Malawi: Part 2
by the Rev. Dr. Randy Bush

For two weeks in July, I took part in a Pittsburgh Presbytery-sponsored trip to Malawi. ELPC is specifically partnered with a congregation in Balaka, Malawi. The church building in Balaka is beautiful—a large, red-brick structure with high ceilings and lots of windows. It took the congregation over 15 years to raise the money, collect the building supplies, and erect this church.

In addition to the Balaka church, there are four “prayer houses” in nearby villages supported by this congregation. Elders and members of the Presbyterian Women (who all wear a distinctive white blouse and black skirt uniform) visit these outlying congregations to lead worship services for them on a regular basis. One of the most touching moments of the entire trip for me came when I visited a very poor prayer house, at which the members presented me with gifts of a few ears of corn and some sweet potatoes. These simple vegetables were truly gifts from their own limited resources, yet handed over with joyful singing and affection as a symbol of our oneness in Christ’s family of faith.

Included in our Pittsburgh Presbytery group were three members of the Presbyterian Church of South Sudan—one minister and two elders. While the Malawians may feel like they have limited resources to offer in comparison to the affluence enjoyed by every American church, they do have much to teach and share with their even poorer colleagues from South Sudan. The church in that country is dealing with incredible hardships. Several pastors were recently beaten and imprisoned; many congregation members were forced to live in refugee camps. Some families had even fled to neighboring countries because it was no longer safe to stay at their homes.

I will share more about my time in Malawi following worship on Sun., Oct. 11. Continue to pray for our African friends in Christ—both in Malawi and South Sudan—and prayerfully consider whether you would like to represent ELPC when the next partnership trip visits Africa in 2017.

Seeking Her Call

Having completed the M.Div. course of study and successfully passed her ordination exams at the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, the Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy is in the final stages of seeking a validated call for ordained ministry in the PC(USA).

This comes as Session is set to propose elevating ELPC’s director of mission ministries post to an associate pastor position in recognition of the importance of our ever-expanding mission work in the life of this church, with Patrice—who has directed the church’s mission ministries for almost 20 years—as a natural candidate.

Watch for details concerning a congregational meeting, likely in early November, to consider the new associate pastor position and a potential call to Patrice to fill it.

Get to Know Other ELPC Members

A great way to have fun and meet other ELPC members is through our Connections Gatherings. These groups consist of 8–12 people who join together for potluck dinners or outings in the area throughout the year.

This year, we also are seeking families with young children, so we may form a dinner group or two with childcare included.

Contact Jack and Elaine Phillips at 412.668.2989 to sign up.
Combined Class  Chapel  
**Oct. 4: Combined Adult Class**
All adult Church School classes will combine to hear guest speaker, the Rev. Ron Stief, from the National Religious Campaign Against Torture.

Contemporaries  Second Floor Parlor  
**Facilitator: Mary Alice Lightle**

**Oct. 11: An Opportunity to Serve and Study**  
We will begin at 6 am, at Community House, where we will prepare and serve breakfast for the residents. Then at 9:45 am, Mary Alice Lightle will lead us in a discussion of the Accra Confession, adopted in 2004, which calls upon Reformed Christians around the world to engage injustices as an integral part of their churches’ witness and mission.

**Oct. 18: Defense for Children International, Palestine**  
Brad Parker, international advocacy officer and attorney, will talk about how Defense for Children International, Palestine, is promoting and protecting children’s human rights.

**Oct. 25: Immigration in the 21st Century**  
“A Christian perspective on immigration challenges us above all to love immigrants, to establish justice for them, and to seek to be reconciled with them in a new and transformed community” (from Clifton Kirkpatrick’s introductory comments in the PCUSA Policy Statement on Immigration). Michele Bossers and Sherry Anderson will lead our exploration of the history and issues of immigration and integration into a new land.

Journey with Scripture  Second Floor Library  
**Facilitator: Jan Lyle Irvin**

“God has made my heart faint...if only I could vanish in darkness”—Job 23:16, 17. October’s readings continue to explore wisdom traditions, including the Book of Job. Through extreme suffering, Job engages God and friends. He emerges with radical new images of God and the world—faith becomes far richer, more complex. Join us as we journey with Job.

**Oct. 11:** Job 23:1–9,16–17; Psalm 22:1–15  
Hebrews 4:12–16; Mark 10:17–31  
**Facilitator: Lora Bethea**

**Oct. 18:** Job 38:1–7, (34–41); Psalm 104:1–9, 24, 35c; Hebrews 5:1–10; Mark 10:35–45  
**Facilitator: Mark Blank**

**Oct. 25:** Job 42:1–6, 10–17; Psalm 34:1–8, (19–22); Hebrews 7:23–28; Mark 10:46–52  
**Facilitator: Pastor Randy**

Seekers  Room 234  
**Facilitator: Gwen Puza**

**Rebellious Women of the Bible and why they Matter**  
Mary Schinhofen, retired educator, has always been fascinated by the stories of the Bible. She will share with us her analysis and reflections about the women of the Bible.

**Oct. 11: Beginnings**  
We will review the concept of “original sin” by examining the roles of Lilith and Eve, and their legacy, as well as analyzing the complexity of the story of Lot and his family.

**Oct. 18: The Outsiders**  
In spite of being viewed with suspicion by society, several women from surrounding tribes had a surprising influence upon Jewish history. We will hear and discuss their stories.

**Oct. 25: The Marys**  
The many Marys in the New Testament can be confusing, but each can teach us significant lessons. We will discuss these women and what we can learn from them.

Soul Food  Room 244 and Pastor’s Conference Room  
**Facilitators: Joe Hajdu and other class members**

**October: Chapters 2 and 3 of An Altar in the World**  
There will be two sections each week, with discussions led by Joe Hajdu and other class members: Vivienne Selia on Oct. 11, Judy Roberts on Oct. 18, and Shirley Fair on Oct. 25.

Young Adults  Session Room  
**Facilitator: Wil Forrest**

**Oct. 25: Conservative and Progressive Theology**  
Come explore current topics in light of a common reading experience, Kurek’s The Cross in the Closet. The book will enhance our conversation, but it is not necessary to read it.

Children and Youth  
**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”

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

**Senior High (grades 9–12) Room 343**  
Curriculum: “Re:Form”

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Note: Classes begin at 9:45 am.
Church School Offering to Support Team Tassy

This year’s church school offering will be collected in support of Team Tassy, a not-for-profit organization committed to eradicating poverty in Haiti.

Team Tassy was founded in 2010 when founder Ian Rosenberger traveled to Haiti following the earthquake. There, he met a young man named Tassy, a Port-au-Prince native who had a cancerous tumor on his face. Ian and his friends spearheaded an effort to bring Tassy to Pittsburgh for treatment, but soon realized that genuinely helping Tassy meant also addressing the poverty to which he would return.

Team Tassy’s mission is to eradicate poverty by working with families in the Port-au-Prince community of Menelas to facilitate job training and placement by building relationships with individuals and families, and walking alongside them to address their unmet basic needs—such as healthcare, education, shelter, and nutrition.

ELPC will be working with the Rodef Shalom congregation through our interfaith youth service partnership, DG2 (Doing Good Together).

Youth Ministry

Sara Hackett, Coordinator for Christian Education and Youth Ministry

Sat., Oct. 3: Making Applesauce 3:30–7 pm
High School students are invited to celebrate fall with an afternoon of applesauce making, games, and a bonfire at Cami Needle’s home. RSVPs and permissions slips are required. See the church calendar online for more details.

Sun., Oct. 4: Confirmation Class Informational Meeting 12:15 pm
ELPC will offer Confirmation Class for students in grades 8 and 9 (or older). Class will meet monthly. Students and parents should join us for this informational meeting and light lunch. RSVP to Gloria Knopp at 412.441.3800 x22.

Sun., Oct. 11: DG2 leaving after Sanctuary worship; returning by 3:30 pm
Youth in grades 4–12 are invited to participate in our first Interfaith event of the school year with our friends at Rodef Shalom congregation. Through lunch, fellowship, and a visit from Tassy (see article above) we’ll explore the question of how we can respond to the needs of others.

Fri., Oct. 16: Tween Bowling 6:30–8 pm
Youth in grades 4–6 are invited to a night of bowling, pizza, trophies, and fun at ELPC. Please bring a beverage or snack to share, and your friends! RSVP to Sara Hackett at 412.673.2926 or SaraH@coh.net.

Young Adult Ministry

Wil Forrest, Coordinator of Young Adult and Outreach Programs

Fri., Oct. 2: First Friday @ Arsenal Cider House 7 pm
We will gather at Arsenal Cider House (300 39th St., Pittsburgh) for some good drinks and conversation. Bring money to try the house beverages and an engaging question for the group to discuss. Learn more at ArsenalCiderHouse.com.

YAM is for you! Your friends are always welcome, too! To RSVP, ask questions, or simply to talk, contact Wil Forrest at Wil@coh.net or 412.441.3800 x14.
**Presbyterian Women**

**Mary Alice Lightle, Moderator**

**Come to the Waters Bible Study**

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

Join us in the second floor Parlor for our lesson, “Life-Giving Waters—Baptism,” based on Matthew 3:13–17. A pot luck lunch will follow the Tuesday Bible study; please bring a snack or salad to share. All are welcome!

**We Refuse to be Enemies: Struggle for a Just Peace in Palestine-Israel**

Friends of Sabeel North America (FOSNA) invites you to a conference from Fri.–Sat., Oct. 16–17, at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. Muslim, Jewish, and Christian activists will address the treatment of Palestinian children; the crisis in Gaza; links between racism in the United States and Israel; and the boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) movement.

For more details and registration information, visit FOSNA.org/pghconference and ELPC.church, or check the Presbyterian Women’s Bulletin Board.

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**Spiritual Life**

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

**Sat., Oct. 3: Silent Saturday  9 am–4 pm**

Our monthly Silent Saturdays are an open, flexible opportunity to pray in silence surrounded by community. Feel free to quietly come and go at any time; participate in shared prayer fully, partially, or not at all; or explore creative opportunities, the beauty of the Courtyard, or the devotion of the Chapel. Refreshments will be available in the Parlor throughout the day. See the website or Spiritual Life Bulletin Board for a breakdown of our schedule.

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**Fall Silent Retreat Details: Fri.–Sun., Oct. 16–18**

- **A Beautiful Space:** Our retreat will be held at the beautiful St. Joseph Retreat Center. Situated near Oglebay Park, the Retreat Center is a large old home with individual bedrooms; shared bathroom and shower facilities; large common rooms; and extensive grounds, which include a Labyrinth, porches, outside seating, and a gazebo. Check it out at StJosephRetreatCenter.org.

- **Transportation:** The ELPC van and/or carpools will be available by request.

- **Silence:** We will begin with Compline at 7 pm (no dinner provided), on Friday, and end our silence with worship on Sunday. Brunch will follow.

- **Prayer Together:** In addition to our worship there will be optional scheduled times of shared silent prayer together in the Chapel.

- **Spiritual Direction:** Each retreatant will have an opportunity to meet with the Rev. Mary Lynn Callahan once during the weekend.

- **Cost:** $120/person. Some scholarship money is available.

- **Space is Limited:** We can only accommodate 9 retreatants, so register now!

Come, be still, and know that God is there! Learn more at ELPC.church.
Mission Matters
The Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy, Director of Mission Ministries

**Sat., Oct. 3: Torture by any other Name: Solitary Confinement**
Join us from 6–8 pm, on Sat., Oct. 3, at ELPC for dinner and discussion on the topic, *Solitary Confinement: The Immoral Treatment of Prisoners in America’s Prison System*, with the Rev. Ron Stief and Shandre Delaney. The event is being sponsored by the ELPC Mission Board and the National Religious Campaign Against Torture. For details or to read about the speakers, visit ELPC.church.

**Sat., Oct. 3: Open Hand Ministries and Garfield Community Farm Workday**
Help out from 9 am–3 pm. For details, contact Emily Rosenthal at 412.963.0139 or ejr116@gmail.com, or the Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy at 412.441.3800 x30.

**Sun., Oct. 4: World Communion Sunday and Peace & Global Witness Offering**
- The sacrament of the Lord’s Supper unites Christians across boundaries of geography, language, ethnicity, and nationality. Observed on the first Sunday of October, *World Communion Sunday* is a time to pray for the ministry of the global Christian church and to remember the oneness we enjoy in Jesus Christ, the light of the world. Join us for communion during both services.
- In order to understand the value of peace, we must try to understand the many costs and forms of conflict: individual, collective, domestic, international, racial—the list is inexhaustible. To help address these diverse challenges, ELPC will receive the *Peace & Global Witness Offering* (formerly the Peacemaking Offering) to support ministries devoted to peacemaking and reconciliation. Gifts will alleviate some of the hurt, violence, and destruction, and will represent the peace of Christ for all of God’s children. Together, we can create a world of peace.
- We also will dedicate our *Peace Pole*, which is outside near our Highland entrance. Join us after Sanctuary worship for a moment of prayer.

**Sat., Oct. 10: Discovering Prison Ministries**
The Justice Committee will host an informational meeting in the second floor Parlor, from 9–11 am, with three local prison ministries, Amachi Pittsburgh, the Foundation of HOPE, and Jail Worship at St. Andrew Lutheran Church. This gathering will assess the level of support for a prison ministry within ELPC and neighboring faith communities, and start exploring partnership opportunities with these existing programs. Registration begins at 8:30 am.

**Sun., Oct. 11: Mission Trip to Pt. Pleasant, N.J.**
Ten ELPC members and friends will travel to Point Pleasant, N.J., to assist with Hurricane Sandy relief, from Oct. 11-16. Please pray for the group as they help rebuild homes and lives.

**Sun., Oct. 11: Pastor Randy’s Presentation on Malawi Mission Trip**
Pastor Randy will share insight and information from his trip to Malawi following Sanctuary worship. Stay and learn about our sister church, Balaka CCAP, and the reconciliation work that is taking place in South Sudan.

**Sun., Oct. 25: Answering Questions about East Liberty’s Redevelopment**
The redevelopment of East Liberty is evident everywhere you look. But, have you ever thought, “What’s happened to the people who used to live here?” or felt that not everyone has benefited from all the new amenities and housing? Then stay after Sanctuary worship as Kendall Pelling, ELDI director of land recycling, will be here to share and answer your questions.

LGBTQ Ministry
Wil Forrest, Coordinator of Young Adult and Outreach Programs

Please hold the members of the LGBTQ Ministry in prayer as we head out of town on our first retreat together. We will focus on transgender and non-binary spirituality and issues.

To learn more about ELPC’s LGBTQ Ministry, please contact Wil Forrest at Wil@coh.net or 412.441.3800 x14. All people are welcome!

God created you. God loves you. Be yourself.

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

Good News
Join us in congratulating those who celebrated their baptisms on Sept. 20:
- Josephine Lazor, daughter of Matthew and Leslie Lazor
- Tristan London, son of Roberta London;
- Paige Will, daughter of Regis Will and Colleen Briner
- Larkin Yoskosky, son of Christopher Yoskosky and Linda Barent

Prayers
We offer our prayers and condolences to family and friends of those who recently passed away:
- Steve Evrard’s aunt, Helen Goodballet
- Rachel Hienz’ brother, Andy Hienz
- Brian Rayne’s father, John Rayne
- Beth Urbaitis’ cousin, Peter Urbaitis
- Kelli Booher’s aunt, Allene Woodard

Reaching Out • October 2015
...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.”

Blessing of the Animals
This celebration of God’s creation and God’s creatures will occur at 4 pm, on Sat., Oct. 10, on the Penn Ave. steps outside of our Sanctuary doors.

Cathedral Concerts Series Begins
On Sun., Oct. 11, our 5th season of Cathedral Concerts opens with The Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh and organist Dr. Ed Moore, in a concert featuring the music of Maurice Duruflé. This concert marks Betsy Burleigh’s final performance as music director of The Mendelssohn Choir.

Duruflé completed his Requiem for chorus and organ in 1947, and dedicated the piece to the memory of his father. He incorporated themes from Gregorian chant into the Requiem, with an emphasis on the Gregorian “Mass for the Dead.” Also featured on the concert will be one of Duruflé’s greatest works for solo organ, the Prelude, Adagio, and Choral Variations on “Veni Creator Spiritus.”

This event is free for all members of the ELPC community. Email Dr. Ed Moore at EdM@coh.net for more information.

Come on a Tour
Join the ELPC Tower Tour on Sun., Oct. 18, following Sanctuary worship. Meet at the Hospitality Desk at the South Highland entrance for the 45-minute tour.

Tim Van Fleet will be our guide as we see the amazing view of the East End. Clothing and shoes for climbing ladders are appropriate.

The Great Exchange: Play
Following Sanctuary worship on Sun., Nov. 1, folks of all ages are invited to this interactive event in the Music Room. We—together, across the generations—will explore fun and important discussion questions through exploring our theme of “play.”

We will have a simple lunch while sharing our life experiences and stories with one another. No preparation is necessary. Just come and enjoy!