Celebrating Pentecost

The church celebration that concludes the Easter season is Pentecost, which falls 50 days later. It used to be a harvest festival for the Jewish community, but it became the date in which we remember how the gift of God’s Holy Spirit enlivened the group of Jesus’ disciples so that they boldly went forth to spread the good news of Christ’s resurrection.

When we celebrate Pentecost on Sun., May 15, our Confirmation Class will be received as adult members of our church (see article below), and we will receive the Pentecost Offering, which helps the church encourage, develop, and support its young people, as well as address the needs of at-risk children—nationally and locally. Please give generously.

Everyone is invited to wear red or colorful clothes as we rejoice in the Spirit’s energizing, fiery presence in our lives.

Welcoming our Confirmands

On Pentecost Sunday, the seven youth of our Confirmation Class will join ELPC as adult members through Baptism and an Affirmation of Faith. They have participated in a year-long process of education, prayer, mentoring, and service together, and are answering God’s call to fully engage in the life and ministries of our church.

The students in this year’s Confirmation Class are Joshua Bellin, Phoebe Brown, Charlotte Bush, Isaac Degenholtz, Chloe Ferrante, Adylade Krimmel, and Ramsey Lewand.

Please hold the youth in prayer, and join us as we celebrate their gifts and witness their adult profession of faith during Sanctuary worship on Sun., May 15.

Sunday Services
*Celebration of the Lord’s Supper

Journey Worship • 8:45 am
Theme: Joy!
- May 8 Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy
- May 15* Rev. Dr. Randy Bush
- May 22 Rev. Heather Schoenewolf
- May 29 Mark Blank

Sanctuary Worship • 11 am
- May 8 Rev. Dr. Randy Bush
- May 15* Rev. Heather Schoenewolf
- May 22 Rev. Dr. Randy Bush
- May 29 Rev. Dr. Randy Bush

Labyrinth Prayer Walk
- Mondays • 7 am–1 pm
- Wednesdays • 9 am–9 pm

Taizé Prayer Service
- Wednesdays • 7 pm
- Rev. Mary Lynn Callahan

Blessing of the Bikes Service on Sat., April 30
As we rejoyce in God’s beautiful creation and seek to promote healthy, sustainable lifestyles, we invite you to ride your bike to ELPC and gather on the Penn Ave. side for a time of prayer, dedication, and celebration on Sat., April 30, at 1:30 pm. Non-bike riders are welcome, too!

After the service, we’ll take a short ride up to Highland Park and back. Representatives from Bike Pittsburgh and the Pittsburgh Bike Share programs also will be present.

Join us for this intergenerational, congregational event!

No Services on Sun., May 1
We will not have our regular worship services or Church School classes on Sun., May 1, due to the Pittsburgh Marathon.
Pastoral Message

The Rev. Dr. Randall K. Bush, Pastor

Geography is no one’s strong suit, so here’s a brief refresher course. When we talk about Israel/Palestine during the time of Jesus, we invariably focus on the cities in Judea and Galilee, like Jerusalem and Nazareth. If you go west from those cities to the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, you bump into other cities mentioned in the New Testament, like Gaza in the south or Tyre and Sidon in the north. What Americans tend to forget is that just north of Israel is the nation-state of Lebanon; and surrounding Lebanon, continuing up the Mediterranean coast, is the nation of Syria. Its capital city, Damascus, is only about 135 miles north of Jerusalem. (By way of comparison, it is 200 miles from Pittsburgh to Harrisburg.)

Some of the earliest Christians lived in Syria—and many still do. (About 10% of Syria is Christian, whether Protestant, Catholic, or Orthodox.) In Acts 9, we read how the apostle Paul had his great conversion experience on the road to Damascus. We know that Paul visited Christians there early in his ministry and again as part of his second missionary journey.

That is why when we hear about Syrian refugees, or about the destruction being caused there by ISIS and Russian forces and soldiers loyal to President Assad, we need to remember that a significant percentage of people being affected are Christians. The news reports should not be dismissed as being about poor unfortunate strangers, followers of Islam, possible terrorists that are fundamentally a risk to our Western way of life. Many of the people fleeing Syria or struggling to survive in that hostile land are followers of Christ, literally our sisters and brothers.

Something more sinister is also happening in that troubled region. There is a small town in the desert between Palmyra and Damascus, which houses a monastery associated with an ancient saint named St. Elian. Elian was a physician who was martyred in 284 CE by a Roman officer when he refused to renounce Christianity. A church was founded in his honor around 432 CE, decorated with frescos and artwork that is some of the oldest in the region. Or “was” some of the oldest in the region, because the ISIS troops destroyed the monastery last fall.

More tragic is that the annual feast for St. Elian was one that thousands of Christians and Sufi Muslims jointly celebrated, for both groups honored him as a holy man. By destroying the monastery, the militants targeted a location that had united Christian and Muslim communities for centuries.

The stories in the news are both geographical and religious. The people caught in places of war and bloodshed are frequently people of faith, and often people of our faith. It is not a question of hierarchies of value—that we should only care for those baptized in the faith we share. Rather we should not allow people to be stripped down into categories and labels (e.g., refugees, terrorists, foreigners) because in the eyes of God, they are always much more than that. Remembering how close today’s violence is striking the land where Jesus, Mary and Paul walked is humbling and hopefully compelling enough to provoke us to action and prayer.
Register Now for VCS
ELPC’s Vacation Church School will be held from Mon.–Fri., June 27–July 1, from 9 am–3 pm. Our theme will be *Surprise! Stories of Discovering Jesus*, published by Mennonite Media. Together, we will explore Bible stories that show us that Jesus shows up in surprising ways—as a young boy teaching in a temple; a miracle worker feeding thousands with a few loaves of bread and a couple fish; a risen Lord who taught disciples on the road. With each surprise, people discovered more about Jesus—and together, we will too!

Children, ages 4–grade 5 (completed), are invited to attend as campers. Registration forms for campers are available online and at our church. Spots are filling up fast, so register now!

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

**Working with Our Neighbors**
Join us from 9 am–3 pm, on Sat., May 7, for neighborhood mission opportunities with Open Hand Ministries and Garfield Community Farm. For more details, contact Emily Rosenthal at 412.963.0139 or Pastor Patrice at 412.441.3800 x30.

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**End-of-Life Issues in Pennsylvania: A Spiritual, Medical, or Legal Event?**
In our lifetimes, many of us become the family member or friend with the responsibility to handle the affairs of a person who dies. Are you prepared?

The Health Ministry invites you to join Carolyn Russ, attorney-at-law, following Sanctuary worship on Sun., May 15, to learn about the tools that are available, your rights and expectations as a decision maker, and the paper work you will need. Having this knowledge now will provide you and your loved one or dear friend with the preparation time to have these difficult discussions that need to take place before a tragedy or a illness changes their life and yours. Lunch will be served.

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**What are You Doing this Summer?**
*by Wil Forrest, Coordinator of Young Adult and Outreach Programs*

With so much happening throughout summer, now is a good time to look at your schedule and start thinking about how you will fit some service in between family vacations and working in your own yard. Here are just a sampling of many ways you can be a faithful servant this summer:

**Witness** to God’s inclusive love at Circle of Faith on Sun., June 5, at 2 pm, and at PrideFest on Sun., June 12, at 12 pm.

**Sweat** as you and your church family helps our neighbors at workdays with Open Hand Ministries and Garfield Community Farm on the first Saturday of each month.

**Volunteer** to help at our Vacation Church School program, Mon.–Fri., June 27–July 1.

**Celebrate** a year of faithful service on Thurs., Aug. 18, at 6 pm, at the Summer Celebration of Service.

To learn more about the iSERVE ministry or to join the weSERVE list, please contact Wil Forrest at Wil@coh.net or 412.441.3800 x14, or visit ELPC.church/programs/iSERVE.
Contemporaries  Second Floor Parlor
Facilitator: Mary Alice Lightle

May 8: The Inauguration of Jesus’ Ministry
At the beginning of his ministry, Jesus read Scripture and addressed the congregation in the synagogue of his hometown of Nazareth. Find out what the fuss was all about.

May 15: Faith Formation in the Midst of a Consumerist Age
A consumerist lifestyle, based on “expect more, pay less,” often conflicts with our Christian faith formation and mission. Scott Hagley, assistant professor of missiology at PTS, will help us discover and cultivate a more gracious, joyful alternative way of life.

May 22 | 29: The Beatitudes
In this two-week series, we will explore the Beatitudes with Middle East scholar and theologian Ken Bailey as our guide. What does it mean to be “blessed?” What is “righteousness?”

Journey with Scripture  Second Floor Library
Facilitator: Jan Lyle Irvin

“The Lord is king! Clouds and thick darkness are all around him; righteousness and justice are the foundations of his throne”—Psalm 97:1–2. How is God so obscured yet so transparent? And how does the risen Lord assure the church of the continual presence and rule of this just God in a violent world? How do we gauge any leadership? Join us in May as we read Scripture and ponder such questions.

May 8: Acts 16:16–34; Psalm 97; John 17:20–26; Revelation 22:12–14,16–17, 20–21; Led by Lora Bethea


May 22: Proverbs 8:1–4, 22–31; Psalm 8; Romans 5:1–5; John 16:12–15; Led by Jan Irvin

May 29: 1 Kings 18:20–21, 22–29, 30–39; Psalm 96; Galatians 1:1–12; Luke 7:1–10; Led by Mark Blank

Soul Food  Third Floor Music Room
Facilitators: Rev. Joe Hajdu and other class members

May 8 | 15 | 22 | 29: Daily Meditations
A discussion of daily meditations by Fr. Richard Rohr, led by Joe Hajdu and other class members. Copies of the meditations will be provided, in print or online, and new participants are always welcome.

Seekers  Room 234
Facilitator: Gwen Puza

May 8: How Acquainted are you with the Holy Spirit?
Dr. Lois Lang, a spiritual director and a former ELPC staff member, will conclude our focus on the Holy Spirit as seen in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

May 15: Wonderful and Horrible: Experiencing the Holy Land from a Palestinian Perspective
Mark Blank, our intern from PTS, will discuss his recent trip to Israel/Palestine, where he visited the Holy sites, met Palestinian Christians, and found hope for a just peace.

May 22: What is Protestant Fundamentalism?
Fundamentalism is a difficult term to define. Mark Blank will lead a discussion attempting to find a definition of fundamentalism, with an eye on the fascinating history that has shaped American Christianity.

May 29: Christianity in North Korea
We will hear two online talks from escapees from North Korea, about their lives there and their hopes for the future. We also will discuss Christianity in North Korea—to what extent they can practice their faith without being sent to jail.

Young Adults  Pastor’s Conference Room
Facilitator: Wil Forrest

May 15: Telling Our Stories
During our final session in our series on personal stories of faith, hope, love, and liberation, we will share our own stories and experiences, while reflecting upon them, their biblical relevance, and their meanings for our own lives.

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: “We Believe”

Note: Classes begin at 9:45 am.

Christian Education
The Rev. Heather Schoenewolf, Associate Pastor for Educational Ministries

Notes:
• Church School classes will not meet on Sun., May 1, due to the Pittsburgh Marathon.
• Sun., June 5, will be our last day of classes before we take a break for summer. Classes will resume on Rally Day, Sun., Sept. 11.
Youth Ministry

Sara Hackett, Coordinator of Christian Education and Youth Ministry

Register Now for this Summer’s Youth Mission Trips
More information—as well as registration and scholarship forms—can be found online for both the Junior High Mission Trip to Crestfield Camp, from July 10–15, and the Senior High Mission Trip here in Pittsburgh, from August 7–12.

Wed., May 18: Senior High Mission Trip Planning 5–7 pm
Youth in grades 8–12 who are planning on participating in this summer’s mission trip here in Pittsburgh should attend this meeting. Parents should attend an informational meeting from 6–7 pm. For more information, contact Sara Hackett at SaraH@coh.net.

Sun.–Fri., July 10–15: ELPC Week at Crestfield Camp
While Crestfield Camp has a full summer schedule of camps for kids who have finished grades 3–12, ELPC youth are encouraged to sign up for this week, when Wil Forrest, Sara Hackett, and the Junior High Mission Trip team will be at camp, too! It will be fun to worship, eat, and play together. Learn more at Crestfield.net.

Sun.–Sat., July 24–30: Trinity Youth Conference
TYC is a regional Presbyterian leadership conference for youth who have completed grade 9 and up, as well as college-age students, at Living Waters Camp in Shellsburg, Pa. The week is full of faith formation, intentional Christian community, play, worship, and thoughtfulness. Information about cost, registration, and schedule can be found at TrinityYouthConference.org.

Young Adult Ministry

Wil Forrest, Coordinator of Young Adult and Outreach Programs

Fri., May 6: First Friday @ The O 7 pm
Get ready for a Pittsburgh Original. Come hungry for mounds of fries and stay for fellowship at the Original Hot Dog Shop in Oakland. Bring money for food. Contact Wil if you want a ride, leaving ELPC at 6:30 pm. Visit the restaurant’s website at TheOriginalHotDogShop.com.

Fri., June 3: First Friday @ Garfield Community Farm 7 pm
We will spend an evening serving at Garfield Community Farm on the corner of Cornwall and Wicklow Streets. Meet in ELPC lobby at 6:45 pm, or meet at GCF at 7 pm. Dress to work in the dirt. Learn more at GarfieldFarm.com.

Food for Thought Updates
Thurs., May 19, will be our final Food for Thought gathering until fall. Youth and their families are invited to join us as we celebrate our amazing year of mentoring together!

Last month, our group had fun learning about backyard chickens with Ms. Jody at Choderwood!
Feeling Crafty?
New helpers of all skill levels are always welcomed. Questions? Please contact Diane Jackson at 412.441.6021 or dnjcks@verizon.net.

- **Knitting Group**
  Join us Room 244 on **Tues., May 3**, from 1–3 pm. Yarn donations are always appreciated.

- **Toy Makers**
  All handy crafters are invited to join us in the Sewing Room on **Wed., May 11** and **25**, from 9 am–12 pm, as we make toys for children locally and around the world.

- **Sewing Group**
  We will meet on **Mon., May 16**, from 2–8 pm, in the Sewing Room. Drop in as your schedule permits. Hand sewing, machine sewing, cutting, or organizing skills are always needed. Come help us make something that will express our care for someone next door or a world away.

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**Presbyterian Women**
*Sherry Anderson and Kelli Booher, Co-Moderators*

**Come to the Waters Bible Study**  
*Second Floor Parlor*
**Mon., May 2**  7 pm  |  **Tues., May 3**  10 am

Our Bible Study series will conclude this month as we look at the River of Life—Hope, with our Scripture focus on Revelation 21–22. In Revelation, we get a picture of the end time, with the fullest revelation of God and God’s creation. This becomes a cause of great hope. We learn that we live in between the revelation of Jesus Christ and this final revelation and that we are to witness to this as we live out our faith.

Childcare will be available upon request for the Monday evening study. A potluck lunch will follow the Tuesday morning study. Bring a snack or salad to share and your own table setting.

**Sat., May 14: Spring Social Potluck**  4:30–6:30 pm

When women support each other, incredible things happen! Let’s get together, meet, network, socialize, and have fun as sisters in Christ in the Social Hall. Every woman in the congregation is invited as we are all a part of Presbyterian Women! We ask that you bring a salad, entree, side, or dessert that introduces you. It could be your favorite food, a family favorite dish, a cultural dish, or a dish that has your name in it! Be as creative as you would like with this assignment as we celebrate who we are as women and gather for a time of fellowship with one another. Please RSVP with what category of dish you will bring (salad, entree, side, or dessert) to Kelli Booher by email at kjbooher@gmail.com or text/call 405.501.0711.

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

**Notes:**
- The **Healing and Wholeness Service** that was scheduled for Sun., May 1, has been cancelled.
- The date for the **May Silent Saturday** has been changed to Sat., May 14, from 9 am–4 pm. Please join us!
- **Centering Prayer** is now meeting on **Tuesdays**, at 7 pm, in the Prayer and Meditation Room.
- **Contemplative Prayer** meets on **Wednesdays**, from 8–8:20 pm, in the Chapel.
- **Mindfulness Meditation** is now meeting on **Thursdays**, at 7 pm, in the Prayer and Meditation Room.

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**Cathedral Yoga**
*Prayerful Yoga in a Sacred Space*
**Wednesdays • 6–7 pm**

FREE (Donations Appreciated)  
Bring your own mat
LGBTQ Ministry
Wil Forrest, Coordinator of Young Adult and Outreach Programs

Sat., May 14: Spiritual Gathering 4 pm
All people are invited to join us at our next Spiritual Gathering.

To learn more about ELPC’s LGBTQ Ministry, please call Wil Forrest at Wil@coh.net or 412.441.3800 x14.

God created you. God loves you. Be yourself.

Hope Academy of Music and the Arts
Linda Addlespurger, Director

Hope Academy Spring Music Events and Performances
Details about all of these events (and more) are on Hope Academy’s online event calendar at ELPC.church/events/category/hope-academy.

Fri., April 29: The Colour of Music Festival 7:30 pm
The 20-piece Colour of Music Virtuosi will perform innovative repertoire incorporating the works of composers of African descent alongside traditional classical works in our Sanctuary. The performances will highlight the impact and historical significance of black classical composers and performers on American and world culture.

Fri., May 13: Warhol Youth Invasion 5–9 pm
Pittsburgh teens will be taking over The Andy Warhol Museum and Hope Academy will be there. This multi-faceted program will feature teens’ unique take on Warhol and their creative expressions infusing and energizing the entire museum—its programming, interpretation, and display. Learn more at Warhol.org.

Sun., May 22: Music Recitals and HAT Co Showcase 2–6 pm
Hope Academy’s end-of-year recitals for instrumentalists and vocalists will take place throughout ELPC. This is a good opportunity for families interested in private music instruction for their children to come and see Hope Academy’s program in action and meet the teaching artists. Please check the website in mid-May for each teaching artist’s schedule. Everyone is invited and it’s all free!

Wed., May 25: Buzzword Perform and Play 6–7 pm
The Opera Theater of Pittsburgh will present performances for young children, from birth to age 5, and their families. Interactive and child-friendly, these shows are short enough to hold the interest of toddlers and engaging enough for their older brothers and sisters. Food will be served, but space will be limited. Please RSVP by calling Norma Meyer at 412.441.3800 x11.

Session News
The Session meeting on April 19 included the examination of incoming officers—people who were nominated by the congregation to fulfill the offices of elder and deacon—as well as those chosen to serve on the Nominating Committee and the Centennial Fund committee. This was a positive experience, especially given the presence of four young people who were elected to serve as youth elders and deacons, and the chance to meet others who are accepting ordained office at ELPC for the first time.

Based on a recommendation from the Renovations Committee, the Session meeting originally scheduled for April 26 was moved to Tues., May 17. At that time, the architects will present the Design Development report related to the renovation project scope, budget, and timetable. Preliminary materials regarding this report will be shared with the Session at their special meeting on Tues., May 10, at which time they also will be examining this year’s class of Confirmation class.

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

Good News
• Julie and Jason Karns had a baby boy, Marcus James Karns, on March 16.

Prayers
We offer our prayers and condolences to the family and friends of those who recently passed away:
• Alvona Boozer
• Liz Hopkins’ daughter, Wendy
• Emma Johnson’s brother, William Andrew Johnson
• Jan Herzer’s mother, Andrea McCready
• Mark Roth’s father, Edward Roth
A Sonic Spectacular

The fifth season of our Cathedral Concerts series will come to a close with the sounds of brass and organ at 7:30 pm, on Fri., May 20, in the Sanctuary.

The Brass Roots, ELPC’s resident brass ensemble, will be joined by our own Dr. Ed Moore at the organ for another sonic spectacular!

There is no admission charge, but a freewill offering will be received. Invite your friends and family for an evening that is sure to lift your spirits!

Be on the look out for details on the next season of Cathedral Concerts beginning this fall!

Tour the Tower

You are invited to join ELPC member Regis Will for the ELPC Tower Tour following Sanctuary worship on Sun., May 15. Take a trek up the steeple via a series of ladders and then enjoy the amazing view of Pittsburgh’s East End.

Appropriate footwear and trousers are recommended. The group will gather in the hospitality area near the guard’s desk immediately after worship. Please allow 30–40 minutes for the tour.

Calling All Graduates

We acknowledge that many people from within our faith family have graduated or will be graduating this spring from high school, college, trade school, graduate school, etc. We would like to celebrate these achievements by honoring our graduates in our August newsletter.

Please submit the graduate’s name—along with degree earned and school attended—to Gloria Knopp at GloriaK@coh.net or 412.441.3800 x22.