Sunday Services
*Celebration of the Lord’s Supper
Journey Prayer • 8:45 am
Held in the Social Hall
Sept. 3 Rev. Dr. Randy Bush

Summer Worship • 10 am
Held in the Courtyard, weather permitting; indoor seating available
Sept. 3* Rev. Dr. Randy Bush

Journey Worship • 8:45 am
Theme: Convergence
Sept. 10 Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy
Sept. 17 Rev. Heather Schoenewolf
Sept. 24 Rev. Dr. Randy Bush

Sanctuary Worship • 11 am
Sept. 10 Rev. Dr. Randy Bush
Sept. 17 Rev. Dr. Randy Bush
Sept. 24 Rev. Heather Schoenewolf

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

Taizé Prayer Service
Wednesdays • 7 pm
Live stream available at ELPC.church
Rev. Mary Lynn Callahan

Renovations to Affect Rally Day
On Rally Day, Sun., Sept. 10, we will resume our regular worship schedule and Church School classes, but there will be some changes due to the renovations. Please reference the bulletin and e-flash for the current location of your class. The Christian Education Committee will sponsor a light continental breakfast, beginning at 9:30 am. We also will commission Church School teachers during both worship services.

By Sun., Oct. 1, all work on the Ground Floor, Whitfield entrance, and Second Floor classrooms and offices will be complete. The construction crews will then begin work on the north hallway on the First Floor—improving restrooms and creating new meeting spaces in the former workroom and front office.

We are grateful that Landau Construction has worked with us to ensure that between 21–30 percent of their work crews reflect gender and racial diversity. Continue to pray for the safety and successful completion of this historic work on our church!

Invite Friends to Explore Our Faith Family
September is a great time to encourage your friends and neighbors to visit ELPC and consider making our church part of their faith journey. So often, once people explore our beautiful building, meet our congregation members, and learn about our diverse mission, educational, and spiritual life offerings, they decide to become a friend or member of our church.

Visitors’ Sunday and the Church Life Sampler on Sun., Sept. 17, provide both a time of welcome for guests and an opportunity in the Social Hall (after the 11 am service) to learn about ELPC’s wide array of programs.

The Church Picnic after worship on Sun., Sept. 24, is a wonderful time for members, friends, and guests to get better acquainted with our faith family. Games and activities will be set up. Fried chicken, hot dogs, potato salad, macaroni salad, a light dessert, and beverages will be provided, but please bring a side or snack to share.

Give some thought to inviting someone for these events, so that the good word and good work of ELPC can continue to grow to the glory of God!
Pastoral Message
The Rev. Dr. Randall K. Bush, Pastor

At a recent family gathering, I witnessed a seven year old grandson sidle up to his grandmother and ask, as nonchalantly as is possible for a seven year old, “Nana, how old do you think you’ll be when you die?” Tucked around that question were obviously a host of other questions, but for the moment something was asked that appeared only to request a straightforward, numerical answer. The grandmother, though, wisely replied, “Oh, my dear, I hope I will be a very old person before my body grows tired and I finally die.” Some negotiations then followed her answer (“Like maybe 100?”) and then the boy ran off. At the very least, he was reassured that someone he loved wasn’t leaving or dying or abandoning him any time soon.

Most questions are attempts to get answers to other questions left unspoken. “How old will you be when you die?” is an attempt to understand what it means to grow old and die, and what it means to live today if tomorrow those we love are no longer with us. A seven-year old boy may not be able to articulate a fear of being abandoned by loved ones or put into words an existential dread of dying. So he asks about things he does understand—numbers, simple math, today’s age minus a future terminal age—in order to get an answer to the secondary question of “how long will we be together?”

Questions about God and Christian faith are quite similar to my grand-nephew’s question posed to his grandmother. People will ask, “Who is God?” and “How does Jesus answer prayers?” and their questions appear to request fairly straightforward, descriptive answers. But there are always secondary questions lurking nearby, hoping to be answered at the same time. For example, secondary faith questions could be “Is the world trustworthy?” or “Do things happen blindly or is there an order to the universe?” That is why, instead of talking about God, Jesus, or prayers, a wise response is to try and address some of the unspoken, secondary questions. You can ask the questioner, “Tell me what you believe in, what you trust, what comforts you when you’re afraid or facing a hard decision.” The responses to those questions are like open doors that lead to deeper conversations, where eventually things like God and Jesus and eternity and love can be discussed together.

Jesus was regularly asked “who are you?” to which he seldom, if ever, gave a direct answer. Instead, he responded by healing those who were wounded or telling a parable about the kingdom of God. Through those secondary responses, disciples then and now come to understand the answer to the primary questions. That is why we still study those responses and read those parables, even as we pray and worship and call out to the God who is wondrous, loving, eternal and mysterious.

A new season is now beginning at ELPC. The coming weeks will have Christian Education classes for all ages, ministry information tables at the Church Life Sampler, and fellowship opportunities at the picnic. All of these are great opportunities for you to reach out and invite others to join with us. And all of them are prime opportunities to talk about secondary questions—deeper questions about faith, love, trust and grace. That’s the important stuff on people’s minds—maybe yours as well. So, come join us!
Mission Matters
The Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy, Associate Pastor for Mission Ministries

Fri. & Sat., Sept. 8 & 9: Painters Needed
The ELPC Mission Board needs your help in supporting one of our local partners on one or both days. Open Door Housing—which provides affordable, safe, and supportive housing for individuals living with HIV—is rehabbing its 15-unit apartment complex on Pittsburgh’s North Side and has doors that need to be painted. For more information, call Michele Bossers at 412.303.9243.

Sat., Sept. 9: Workday with OHM 9 am–3 pm
All ages and skill levels are welcome to help Open Hand Ministries rehab an abandoned house into a quality, affordable home for a family. For details, email Emily Rosenthal at EJR116@gmail.com or Pastor Patrice at 412.441.3800 x130.

Mission Malawi by the Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy
A delegation of eight from the Pittsburgh Presbytery Malawi Partnership, including me, departed from Dulles Airport in D.C. on July 11. A day later, we met up at Addis Ababa Airport in Ethiopia to continue our journey with Abusa (Pastor) Joseph and Elder Ngang from South Sudan. Arriving in Chilika Airport in Malawi on July 12, we were met with singing and dancing, as well as welcoming arms by our brothers and sisters from various CCAP churches—but most prominently by members of ELPC’s sister church, Balaka CCAP! My bags were whisked away, flowers were thrust into my hands, and thus began my two weeks in Malawi.

The beauty and majesty of Malawi is only eclipsed by the love, faithfulness, and hospitality of the people and specifically the members of Balaka CCAP. At first, the members of the congregation didn’t quite know what to make of me. But after breaking bread, worshiping together, traveling to a prayer house in the “country,” attending weekly worship at the Railway Zone, and worshiping with the older women of Mvano on Saturday, I felt and was treated like a long-lost daughter who had returned home. The warm hospitality I received in the homes of the three families where I stayed—as well as those who opened their homes and hosted dinners and gatherings—was beyond compare.

I also witnessed the poverty and need of many traveling to a village close to the border Mozambique with staff from the Sue Ryder Foundation. We traveled there to check on and administer medication to people who suffer from asthma, cerebral palsy, and other physical disabilities. I was saddened and alarmed as the physical therapist on the team tried to manipulate the arms and legs of a four-year-old child—no larger than the average American two-year-old—thinking she suffered from a form of physical disability, only to realize she was unable to sit or stand on her own as a result of severe malnutrition. My heart broke.

There is so much to share, but time and space didn’t allow. However, I will share that the people of Malawi are filled with the Spirit of God, they worship and are joyful in spite of their difficulties, and they welcome strangers and missionaries with open arms. God is truly at work in that country where so many have so little.

I learned a lot from them in my two weeks there, and pray that the lessons I learned will continue to renew and transform me and my faith daily. Ambuye alemekese! Praise be to you, God!

October is Mission Month
Plan on a vibrant, enlightening, and transformational Mission Month in October—with themes around justice, anti-racism, full inclusion, and the Children’s Sabbath. Keep a look out for more details.

ELPC Session Updates
At its recent meetings, the Session:
• Welcomed nine new members and four new friends of ELPC;
• Continued a discussion on anti-racism based on the book Race in a Post-Obama America;
• Considered a request to provide a supportive investment in low-income/subsidized housing in East Liberty and Larimer; and
• Heard a report from Pastor Patrice about her mission trip to Malawi.

Praise, Sing, & Ring
To learn more about any of our choirs, email Dr. Ed Moore at EdM@coh.net.
• Journey Praise Team sings at our Journey worship services on Sundays at 8:45 am. The choir rehearses on Thursdays at 5:30 pm, beginning Sept. 7.
• Chancel Choir sings weekly at our Sanctuary worship services on Sundays at 11 am. The choir rehearses on Thursdays at 7 pm, beginning Sept. 7.
• Handbell Choir rings several times throughout the year at our Sanctuary worship services. The choir rehearses on Tuesdays at 6 pm, beginning on Sept. 19.
The Lord’s Prayer may be described as a “very bright point of light” for those in total darkness. While it has similarities to Jewish daily prayer, it also has significant differences. Jesus prayed this prayer in Aramaic, rather than Hebrew, and it is succinct and direct; the paradigm is “do not heap empty phrases as the Gentiles.” Our 4-week study of the Lord’s Prayer will be based on the late Ken Bailey’s scholarship.

Sept. 10: God Our Father (Matthew 6:5–9)
We will consider the One to whom we pray. “Our Father” invokes a loving God who is both near and “in the heavens.” Prayer rests on the premise that the Creator God can hear us when we speak to Him.

Sept. 17: God’s Holiness (Matthew 6:9)
We will discuss the first petition of the Lord’s Prayer—a request for God to demonstrate the holiness of His name. Because God is holy, His people are to be holy.

Sept. 24: God’s Kingdom and Our Bread (Matthew 6:10–11)
We will consider the second and third petitions—the coming of the kingdom of God and the fulfilling of the will of God—as well as the fourth petition—God’s assurance of the gift of bread.

“Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law. Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep.”—(Romans 13:10–11). The Christian vision of the future is not dystopian, but rather one of nearing salvation, where you’re called to steadfastly love all the way into it—starting now! Join us as we become awake through reading scripture:

Sept. 10: Exodus 12:1–14; Psalm 149; Romans 13:8–14; Matthew 18:15–20
Sept. 17: Exodus 14:19–31; Psalm 114; Romans 14:1–12; Matthew 18:21–35
Sept. 24: Exodus 16:2–15; Psalm 105:1–6, 37–45; Philippians 1:21–30; Matthew 20:1–16

“Seekers” Chapel
Facilitator: Gwen Puza

Sept. 10: The Spirituality of Place led by Pastor Patrice
Pastor Patrice and ELPC have been active participants in East Liberty’s redevelopment. How does our faith influence the development and results? Join us and learn more about ELPC’s role as a community of faith.

Sept. 17 & 24: Ripples of Faith & Justice led by Pastor Randy
Why do important issues quickly become complicated? Why aren’t there simple solutions to racism, immigration, sanctuaries, Israel/Palestine? Pastor Randy will explore how these topics ripple outward into concentric circles that challenge us to think holistically and faithfully as we seek to “do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God.”

Young Adults Room 219
Facilitator: Wil Forrest

Sept. 10: Prayer Time
Join us and connect with other young adults for biblical reflection and some group prayer.

Children and Youth
Young Children’s Ministry/Infants–Age 2 Nursery Suite
Curriculum: “Wee Children at Church”
A denominational curriculum for nursery-age children.

Pre-school/Ages 3–5 Nursery Suite
Curriculum: “Gospel Light”
Bible stories are explored through interactive storytelling, prayer, and artistic response.

Kindergarten and Grade 1 Room 336
Curriculum: “Godly Play”
Children learn and explore stories of the Bible through storytelling, asking “wondering” questions, and play.

Grades 2–3 Room 338
Curriculum: “Godly Play”
Building on the K–1 program, the children’s concepts of God and faith keep expanding.

Grades 4–5 Room 335
Curriculum: “Seasons of the Spirit”
A lectionary-based, hands-on curriculum for tweens.

Junior High (grades 6–8) Room 341
Curriculum: “Seasons of the Spirit”
A lectionary-based curriculum, with age-appropriate materials.

Senior High (grades 9–12) Room 343
Curriculum: “Re: Form”
This is a youth faith formation series dealing with tough questions of faith.
Youth Ministry

Sara Hackett, Coordinator of Christian Education and Youth Ministry

Sun.–Mon., Sept. 3–4: Sr. High Retreat at Crestfield
All youth in grades 9–12 are invited to our fall kickoff retreat. The retreat’s theme, RE-CREATION, will guide our Bible study, worship, games, and group-building activities. For more details, permission slip, and packing list, see the youth calendar section on the website or talk to Sara Hackett.

Sun., Sept. 24: Training for Youth Worship Leaders 10:15–10:45 am
Any youth in grades 4–12 who is interested in serving as an acolyte, crucifer, or usher during Sanctuary worship may attend this training session in the Sanctuary.

Sun., Oct. 1: Confirmation Class Informational Meeting 12:15 pm
ELPC will offer Confirmation Class for students in grades 8–9 (or older). Class will meet monthly and students will be confirmed on Pentecost Sunday, May 20. Students and parents should join us for this meeting. RSVP to Gloria Knopp at 412.441.3800 x122.

Sr. High Youth Work in, Explore the Big Apple
Senior high youth from our faith family completed mission work and had some fun in New York City in early August. Below are some photos from their trip.

Young Adult Ministry

Wil Forrest, Coordinator of Young Adult and Outreach Programs

Fri., Sept. 1: First Friday @ Unity Presbyterian Church 7 pm
Can you handle the truth? This coffeehouse evening at Unity PC (1146 Greentree Rd., 15220) will include fellowship, treats, and lots of Fair Trade PLUS Café Justo coffee. Participants are asked to bring a poem, song, reading, scripture, story, or anything creative to share with the group that is focused on our theme of Truth. In addition, please bring a dessert to share.

Sun., Sept. 24: Lunch and More 12 pm
Let’s spend the day together after worship by sharing lunch at the annual Church Picnic. While we eat and visit, we will choose between a few options of activities before heading out together for an afternoon of fun. Be prepared for anything!
Presbyterian Women

Sherry Anderson, Moderator

The Book of Hebrews: A Cloud of Witnesses Bible Study

Tues., Sept. 5 10 am | Mon., Sept. 11 7 pm

Our first lesson is titled In Community with Jesus Christ. This year’s study appears to be as stimulating and thought-provoking as those of prior years. We look forward to seeing everyone at one or the other of these get-togethers. Our Tuesday meeting will be in the Social Hall, and Monday’s will be in the McKelvey Room.

Child Safety Reminder

ELPC strives to ensure the safety of every child and youth who enters the building, whether for an ELPC program or with a community group. Our Child Safety Policies conform to Pennsylvania state law, so that ELPC can remain an “open door church” and a safe haven for all.

Now that a new school year is upon us, it’s a fitting time to review some of our policy, remembering that we all must work together to ensure the safety of our kids. Please remember that:

1. Every child or youth in grade 12 or younger must be supervised by adults at all times—either those who are running the program or by their parent/caregiver.

2. Children in grade 5 or younger must be accompanied to class and/or to the restroom. Youth in grades 6+ may transition between spaces and go to the restroom on their own.

3. Everyone who works or volunteers with children or youth must have their Act 33/34 Clearances—and FBI clearances for those who have not lived in Pennsylvania for the last 10 years. ELPC will facilitate and pay for this process for all who volunteer or work at ELPC.

Parents and guardians, please note that you will be asked to complete a new registration form for your child/children to participate in ELPC programs—including Church School, Nursery and Extended Session. You only need to fill out one form per year, as it can be used across programs.

Spiritual Life

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

Thurs., Sept. 28: Faith, Science, and Our Spiritual Life 6:30 pm

Got questions? Interested in the connections between faith and science? Want to meet similarly minded folks? Join in the conversation on the last Thursday of each month as we read, watch videos, and discuss the faith that we share, ways in which it overlaps with science, and how all of that affects our spiritual life.
LGBTQ Ministry
Wil Forrest, Coordinator of Young Adult and Outreach Programs

All people are welcome to join us at our Spiritual Gathering following our Sanctuary worship service on Sun., Sept. 10, when we will have a special focus on being an ally. Allies are always encouraged to attend, but especially this month. Check the weekly bulletin for other events and updates.

Interested in getting involved in our LGBTQ Ministry? Please contact Wil Forrest at Wil@coh.net or 412.441.3800 x114.

God created you. God loves you. Be yourself.

2017 Church School Offering
This year’s church school offering will support the work of Open Hands Ministries (OHM). Serving the Pittsburgh neighborhoods of Garfield and East Liberty, OHM is committed to promoting justice in our communities by helping local families become wealth-builders, renovating houses in developing areas for first-time homeowners, and remaining in a supportive relationship to help their participating families thrive.

As we live in a space undergoing renovation, we can show our gratitude for a God who is always doing new things by supporting OHM. Children, youth, and adults can contribute to the 2017 Church School Offering during their Church School Classes. Keep a look out for more information in the weekly bulletin.

Help Wanted
by Wil Forrest, Coordinator of Young Adult and Outreach Programs

You may read the weekly bulletin and see where we are seeking volunteers. You may visit the iSERVE bulletin board or webpage to browse service opportunities. You may think all seems to be running well at the church, so your help is not needed. You would be wrong. We need you!

There are almost continuous needs for new volunteers in these roles: usher/greeter for worship, club one sixteen dinner provider, new member host, liturgist in worship, front desk hospitality, and more. These are important ministries that require many hands, so please consider adding your hands to help serve.

To read about becoming a member of the weSERVE list or other service opportunities, visit ELPC.church/programs/iSERVE. For more information or to ask questions, contact Wil Forrest at Wil@coh.net or 412.441.3800 x114.

Congratulations, Grads
Join us in congratulating and offering our best wishes to those in our faith family who recently celebrated their graduation.

High school graduates include Ian Bush, Will Dowd, Ada Griffin, Virginia Kane, Julia Lewand, McKenzie Morrissey, Akil Turner, Tyrese Williams, and Xander Yates.

We also congratulate T.J. Benedict, who graduated magna cum laude from the University of Richmond.

ELPC People
If you have news to share, please call Gloria Knopp at 412.441.3800 x122.

Good News
Please welcome our new members who joined on July 16:
Kitty Brunkhorst, Bob & Linda Crossey, Austin Hestdalen, Keana Knight, Polly McQueen & Erich Stein, Nick & Laura Stelitano, and Rick Watling & Sofia Sunseri.

Prayers
We offer our prayers and condolences to the family and friends of those who recently passed away:
• Harold McDonald’s brother and Maelene Myers’ brother-in-law, Gerald McDonald
• Maurice (Reese) McClellan
• DeeDee Frye’s husband, Ron “Frenchy” Frye
• The Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy’s grandmother, Mattie Lunsford
• Donna Stephens’ husband, Dr. Norris Stephens. Dr. Stephens was an ELPC member for 57 years.
“...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.”

Building Closed
The ELPC office will be closed all day on Labor Day, Mon., Sept. 4.

Take a Tour of the Tower
Join tour guide Steve Evrard to climb the heights of the church tower following our Sanctuary worship service on Sun., Sept. 17. Gain insights into the history and construction of the landmark tower, as you ascend many sets of spiral stairs to enjoy unparalleled views of East Liberty and beyond.

It is best to have sturdy shoes and some stamina (the tour is not ideal for small children). The tour will take 45–60 minutes. Please gather by the desk at the Highland entrance following worship.

Cathedral Concerts are Tuning Up
Mark your calendars now for the seventh season of our Cathedral Concerts series! Performances include:

♫ Essence of Joy from the Pennsylvania State University will join the ELPC Chancel Choir to perform on Sun., Nov. 5, at 3 pm.

♫ Eastman at East Liberty, co-sponsored with the Organ Artists Series of Pittsburgh, will bring Ivan Bosnar, Amanda Mole, Caroline Robinson—three rising star organists from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York—to perform on Sun., Nov. 19, at 3 pm.

♫ Christmas in East Liberty will take place on Fri., Dec. 15, at 7:30 pm. The Brass Roots, Edward Alan Moore, and the ELPC Chancel Choir will return for this East Liberty holiday tradition.

♫ Hope Academy Teaching Artists in Concert will be held on Sun., March 4, at 3 pm. The talented faculty members from Hope Academy of Music and the Arts will return for another innovative and eclectic concert.

♫ The Art of Song will take place on Sun., April 8, at 3 pm. Singers from the ELPC Music Ministry will celebrate the interaction of the visual arts with the vocal arts.

♫ Back to the Movies will be held on Fri., May 25, at 7:30 pm. The Brass Roots and organist Edward Alan Moore will join forces with Pittsburgh Symphony trombonist James Nova for a spectacular follow-up to last season’s Space Odyssey.

Visit ELPC.church/worship/cathedral-concerts for more details.