October is Mission Month at ELPC

Celebrate, commemorate, and learn more about ELPC and how we are “reaching out” into our community and the world. Each Sunday this month, we will have a special theme for our Sanctuary worship services.

Oct. 7: World Communion Sunday | Peace and Global Witness Offering
ELPC will join sibling congregations around the world to celebrate our oneness in Christ as we partake of the bread and cup at the Table, and receive the Peace and Global Witness Offering (see below). Following our Sanctuary worship service, Kendall Pelling, director of land recycling at East Liberty Development, Inc., will give an update on the redevelopment in our community. A light lunch will be served and a limited number of seats will be available for a short bus tour of our community. Details to come.

Oct. 14: Full Inclusion Sunday
Join us at Sanctuary worship as we continue to lift up our oneness in Christ by celebrating all of God’s people. The Renaissance City Choir—Western Pennsylvania’s only LGBTQA choral group—will join us in worship.

Oct. 21: 25th Anniversary Celebration of Partnering with Balaka CCAP
On this day, we will celebrate our 25-year partnership with Balaka (Malawi) Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP). The delegation from Malawi will be in Pittsburgh from Oct. 10–23. Many activities are planned for their stay, and we will host a special celebration after our Sanctuary worship service. More information and surprises to come.

Oct. 28: Immigration Sunday
ELPC will lift up our partnership with Casa San José and other opportunities to care for the immigrant community in Pittsburgh.

Peace and Global Witness Offering

Each year on World Communion Sunday, we receive the Peace and Global Witness Offering, which enables Presbyterians to promote the Peace of Christ by addressing systems of injustice across the world. ELPC will receive the Peace and Global Witness Offering during worship on Sun., Oct. 7.

Individual congregations utilize 25% of this offering to connect with the global witness of Christ’s peace. In past years, ELPC has committed our local portion to the Pittsburgh Presbytery Freedom Rising fund for ministry to African-American males. Mid councils retain 25% for ministries of peace and reconciliation, and the remaining 50% is used by the Presbyterian Mission Agency to advocate for peace and justice in cultures of violence—including our own—through education and Christian witness projects.

Taizé on All Saints Day

Join us for a special Taizé service on All Saints’ Day, Wed., Oct. 31, 7 pm, as we remember all the people in our lives who are no longer with us. As we move from the Chapel through the candle-lit Sanctuary, we will celebrate our life of faith together on the Chancel before we move to the Crypt, where we will remember the saints who have gone before us. Don’t miss this touching prayer experience of our unity and eternity in God.
Pastoral Message

The Rev. Dr. Randall K. Bush, Pastor

It’s odd that something as straightforward as forgiveness can actually be quite complicated. Saying the words “I forgive you” does not seem like a huge undertaking. But all of us know that there is much more to the process of forgiveness than just saying three little words.

There are lots of biblical examples of forgiveness, which I am happy to mention, but a caveat needs to be offered after I list some off. There is forgiveness shown by God toward Adam and Eve despite their disobedience in the Garden of Eden. There is the forgiveness exhibited by the Father who welcomes home the Prodigal Son with a loving embrace and celebratory party. There are the words of forgiveness spoken by Joseph to his brothers—the ones who sold him into slavery in Egypt—when he said to them, “Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve our people.” There are the admonitions contained in the Lord’s Prayer and the verses in the Sermon on the Mount: “If you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.” And there is the powerful statement made by Christ from the cross: “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”

The Bible seems quite clear about the importance of showing forgiveness. The caveat that needs to be mentioned, though, is that people commonly feel that the biblical imperative to forgive doesn’t precisely apply to their particular situation. They feel there are mitigating factors that push the clarity of scripture into murkier territory. For example, how are we to treat forgiveness if the other person does not repent of their actions or refuses to apologize? Are there some crimes so heinous that forgiveness is illogical, if not impossible? Must we forgive and forget, or does some of the pain we suffer necessarily linger long after we offer words of forgiveness?

Each of those questions merits a longer discussion. But I recently read an anecdote included in a play called “Fatherland” that brings this topic closer to real life. One man interviewed for the play told how he was once having a bad day and turned to his daughter and swore at her. She left and the man felt awful. At bedtime that night, he said to her “I shouldn’t have said those words to you; no adult should say that to you.” And the girl said, “I’ll tell you what, Dad, just this once, I’ll forgive you.”

Maybe the place to start with the topic of forgiveness is not wondering what is feels like for us to forgive, but to call to mind the times when someone has forgiven us. There is a power in hearing someone say to you (even with limitations such as “just this once”), “I’ll tell you what, I’ll forgive you.” There is a directness in the father-daughter conversation that models a faithful honesty on both sides and challenges us to be willing to “play this part” in the drama of our own lives—to apologize openly and to forgive graciously.

We have all been forgiven countless times, both by God and those around us. Letting that be our starting point will help us navigate our emotions and unsettledness when we are asked to forgive. Christ calls us to be people of mercy, grace and forgiveness, so whatever it takes, it is worth the effort.

Randy Bush
Stewardship Campaign: Radical Hospitality

ELPC is a sanctuary for all; a place where our faith can grow in community regardless of who we are, where we come from, and what we do. As we rejoice in our remodeled building and anticipate our bicentennial celebration, we will be looking for more ways to live our mission of radical hospitality. We are honoring our mission and this important time in our church history by uplifting Radical Hospitality as our Stewardship theme. We want our hearts and our finances to be poised and ready to respond to wherever God leads us next. Our hope is to increase our pledges and contributions by 5%.

As we travel through this Stewardship season, our hope is that you will think about times that you have received or witnessed radical hospitality. Share your stories with others: it’s contagious! We hope you join us on Stewardship Sunday, Nov. 11, bringing your pledge to worship that day, and seeing this act as part of our commitment to extend radical hospitality to all.

“Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers...And so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.”—Romans 12:13, 18

Mission Matters

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


How and how much are people of your own heritage portrayed in media and entertainment? What authors do you read? What do your children learn in history classes? How do you decide where and when to shop? Aside from theology, what do you consider when selecting a worship community? What are three things that you want your children and grandchildren to know when they leave the house? What is your experience with community policing?

How you answer these questions may say more than you think about your racial heritage and experience. Join us as we continue to explore racism as seen through the eyes of privilege.

Environmental Tips from the Justice Committee

Do you ever think about how much energy cars consume? Car engines are a major source of greenhouse gas emissions. Here are some tips to help conserve fossil fuels and reduce emissions.

Avoid Idling
Many states, such as New Jersey, prohibit ordinary cars from idling for more than 3 minutes, because running the motor when you are not moving releases particulates and greenhouse gases into the environment. Turn off your engine while you wait.

Slow Down
On the highway, most cars operate more efficiently when traveling at 55–60 mph. At higher speeds, cars burn more gas. In fact, almost 30% more gas is consumed at 80 mph than at 55–60 mph. If the national speed limit were set at 55 mph, it would save 1 billion barrels of oil per year.

Walk, Take Public Transportation, Carpool
A car parked at home emits no greenhouse gases or toxic pollution.

ELPC Session Updates

At the recent Session meeting:

• The ELPC Bicentennial plans were reviewed with key events scheduled for May 12–19, 2019.
• Details about the 2018 Stewardship campaign were shared, planning for Stewardship Sunday on Nov. 11.
• Updates were provided from the Mission Board regarding October special events and the visit of Malawi sister-church representatives.

Sign Up to Join Our Connections Dinners

It’s time again to form new Connections Dinner groups. These small groups of 8–12 people meet monthly or bimonthly to share a meal together—either at someone’s home, a restaurant, or ELPC.

Connections Dinners are a great way to meet new people at ELPC and make new friends.

The deadline to sign up is Mon., Oct. 1. If you are interested in participating, please contact Elaine Phillips at connectelpc@gmail.com.
**Note:** Classes are on Sundays, 9:45 am.

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**Christian Education**

*The Rev. Heather Schoenewolf, Associate Pastor for Educational Ministries*

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### Children and Youth

- **Young Children’s Ministry/Infants–Age 2**  *Nursery*
  - Pre-school/Ages 3–5  *Room 110 B*
- **Kindergarten–Grade 1**  *Room 206*
- **Grades 2–3**  *Room 205*
- **Grades 4–5**  *Room 211*
- **Middle School** (grades 6–8)  *Room 207*
- **Senior High** (grades 9–12)  *Room 217*

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### Contemporaries  *Harambe Room*

*Facilitator: Contemporaries Steering Committee*

**Oct. 7: Theology for Presbyterians: The Bible**

Just because Presbyterians don’t always interpret the Bible literally, doesn’t mean we don’t take it seriously! We will consider the Bible as the Word of God.

**Oct. 14: Theology for Presbyterians: God**

We worship a good and great Triune God who is involved in the world from creation to today. What does it mean to be created in the image of God?

**Oct. 21: Theology for Presbyterians: Jesus Christ**

We confess Jesus as the “Christ” and “the Word made flesh,” one person with two natures: divine and human. How does the cross embody our faith and empower us to live faithfully?

**Oct. 28: Theology for Presbyterians: Holy Spirit**

We believe the Holy Spirit anointed the disciples and crowds after Jesus’ ascent to heaven, giving birth to the Church. Today, we profess the Holy Spirit inspires and guides us still. How does the Holy Spirit empower the Church today?

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### Journey with Scripture  *Second Floor Library*

*Facilitators: Jan Lyle Irvin, Lora Bethea, and staff facilitators*

“Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know.”—Job 42:3

Our readings continue exploring the wisdom tradition in scripture. After contending with friends and God through a period of extensive suffering, Job lets go of some traditional perceptions about God. Radical new images of God and a far richer multipolar world emerge. Likewise, our world passes away—the new can emerge. Join us on this journey.

**Oct. 7:**  
Job 1:1, 2:1–10; Psalm 26; 
Hebrews 1:1–4, 2:5–12; Mark 10:2–16

**Oct. 14:**  
Job 23:1–9, 16–17; Psalm 22:1–15; 
Hebrews 4:12–16; Mark 10:17–31

**Oct. 21:**  
Job 38:1–7 (34–41); Psalm 104:1–9, 24, 35c; 
Hebrews 5:1–10; Mark 10:35–45

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

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### Seekers  *Garth Overlook Room*

*Facilitator: Gwen Puza*

**Oct. 7: The Church and Community Development**

Pastor Patrice and our guest Kendall Pelling (director of land recycling at East Liberty Development, Inc., and elder at Valley View Presbyterian Church) will lead our class and discuss the theological imperative for ELPC and other churches to be involved and engaged, especially in a changing community.

**Oct. 14: Our Youth Work Among the Floods and Poverty**

The high school mission trip team will be sharing pictures and stories from their mission trip with West Virginia Ministry of Advocacy and Workcamps. The team completed recovery work from the long-term devastation of floods and poverty. They will share what they learned about the coal mining area and how they saw God’s abundant hope and compassion at work.

**Oct. 21 and 28: Pagans, Jews, and Christians in the Roman Empire: How and Why Did Christianity Triumph?**

In traditional histories of Western culture, the emergence of Christianity in the Roman Empire is understood as a triumph over Judaism and paganism that happened rapidly across the great expanse of the Roman Empire. The reasons for this often claim that the many gods of the time had a proclivity to get angry on a whim, and the absence of true spirituality and social morality in these other beliefs. Renewed methods of research, archaeological discoveries, and the elimination of Christian bias from history books show that there is no historical evidence for those claims.

**Oct. 21:**  
The Worlds of Ancient Judaism and Ancient Paganism

**Oct. 28:**  
The Conversion of Constantine the Christianizing of the Roman Empire

Classes will be led by Rebecca I. Denova, PhD., a senior lecturer of Early History of Christianity in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Pittsburgh, and a religious book reviewer for the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*.

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### Soul Food  *Good Samaritan Room*

*Facilitator: Rev. Joe Hajdu*

**October: Surrender to Love Book Discussion**

We will continue our discussion of *Surrender to Love: Discovering the Heart of Christian Spirituality*, by David Benner. New participants are always welcome and books can be ordered quickly.
Youth Ministry
Sara Hackett, Coordinator of Christian Education and Youth Ministry

Thurs., Oct. 4: Food 4 Thought Begins 4:30–6:30 pm
Food 4 Thought is a no-cost learning support and enrichment program for youth in grades 6–8, which equips and encourages them by exploring and enjoying food.

For more information about how your child can participate in our Food 4 Thought program, call Sara Hackett at 412.673.2926. If you are interested in becoming an adult mentor or a meal team member, call Wil Forrest at 412.260.2554.

Mon., Oct. 8: Mission Work @ World Vision 12–4:30 pm
Youth in grades 6–12 will meet at ELPC, eat lunch and then travel to World Vision in Sewickley to sort and count clothing donations which will be sent around the world. RSVP and permission form are required. Friends are welcome!

Fri., Oct. 19: Tween night | Pumpkin Carving 6–8 pm
Youth in grades 4–6 are getting together for pizza and pumpkin carving. Friends are always welcome at this monthly time of fellowship and fun!

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

Fri., Oct. 5: First Friday @ Arsenal Cider House 7 pm
We will gather at Arsenal Cider House (300 39th St., 15201) for some good drinks and conversation. Bring money to try some of the house beverage and an engaging question for the group to discuss. Learn more about this local hot spot at ArsenalCiderHouse.com.

Sat., Oct. 20: Acknowledging White Privilege 5:30–8 pm
Join other folks in the Social Hall as the ELPC Mission Board hosts a potluck meal and an engaging discussion about white privilege as part of their Facing Systemic Racism: Uncovering Our Implicit Bias series. See more details on page 1. Come hungry to eat and learn.

Retreat @ Crestfield Camp for Grades 6–12
Fri.–Sun., Nov. 16–18

Doing Good Together Service Project
Sun., Nov. 4

Save the Dates

Bowling, Bingo, and Board Games
The Christian Education Committee invites folks of all ages to an evening of fun and fellowship with bowling, Bingo, and a wide collection of board games on Sat., Nov. 10, 5:30–7:30 pm. Pizza will be provided, but please bring a side or salad to share.

Our Young Adult Ministry is for you, and your friends are always welcome too! For details on any of our upcoming events or if you need a ride, please contact Wil Forrest at Wil@coh.net or 412.441.3800 x114.
ELPC Tours Continue
How well do you know ELPC from the top of the tower to the darkest corner of the basement?
Throughout the year, ELPC offers a variety of tours for members, friends, and visitors following Sanctuary worship on Sundays. The tours are designed to provide panoramic views from our tower, showcase the architecture of our Gothic Sanctuary and Romanesque Chapel, highlight the hidden stories in our stained glass, and explore our cavernous basement with giant boilers that heat the building and blowers that feed air to more than 7,000 organ pipes.

This month, we’ll climb the heights of our central tower on Sun., Oct. 7, and learn about intricate design details—large and small—in our Sanctuary and Chapel on Sun., Oct. 21. Join the tours at the Highland Ave. entrance following Sanctuary worship.

Other Upcoming Tours Include:
• Sun., Nov. 4: Underground
• Sun., Nov. 11: Sanctuary and Chapel
• Sun., Dec. 2: Stained Glass
• Sun., Dec. 16: Trinity Chapel
• Sun., Dec. 30: Sanctuary and Chapel

Presbyterian Women
Sherry Anderson, Moderator

Bible Study | God’s Promise: I am with You
Mon., Oct. 1 7 pm | Tues., Oct. 2 10 am
All women at ELPC are welcome to join us as we continue our Bible study. This month’s lesson is titled “God with us in our Uncertainty.”

Monday’s group will meet for Bible study and fellowship in the Harambe Room. Tuesday’s group will meet for Bible study in the Second Floor Parlor, followed by a potluck lunch. Soup will be provided, but please bring a side or salad to share, as well as your own place setting.

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

Sun., Oct. 14: Heretics, Doubters, and Other Saints 12 pm
The ELPC Spiritual Life Committee (SLC) asks you to consider a few questions.

1. Do you secretly think that if everyone actually knew what you believe—and what you do not believe—that you would not be welcome in church?
2. Do you have some deep seated doubts about parts of the Christian story?
3. Do you cross your fingers when you recite parts of the Apostle’s Creed?
4. Have you answered “yes” to any or all of these questions?

If so, that’s normal. There are no right or wrong answers or thoughts. You may feel like you are alone, but you are not. Poet Alfred Tennyson famously said, “There lives more faith in honest doubt, than in half the creeds.”

To help you on your faith journey, the SLC is offering a new quarterly program as an opportunity for dialogue, called Heretics, Doubters and Other Saints. Join us at our first meeting on Sun., Oct. 14, following Sanctuary worship. Come together with others who have been carrying around secret doubts and questions, talk about the wide breadth of theology within the Presbyterian church, and explore how your personal faith might be more complete.

Sat., Oct. 27: Science and Theology Retreat Day 9 am–4 pm
You are invited to attend our Science and Theology Retreat Day. We will watch the Illia Delio videos, taking time to stop and discuss as we go along. We also will begin to form experiential ways to reconcile our modern science with our faith, and how such a theology would look in practice using art and creative liturgy.

New folks are welcome! Please RSVP with the Rev. Mary Lynn Callahan at MaryLynn@coh.net or 412.441.3800 x141 so that we can plan lunch and snacks.

Save the Date
Exploring Buddhism
Plan on joining the SLC on Sun., Nov. 4, 12–3 pm, for an exploration of how Buddhism’s teachings and practices fit with our Christian tradition.
LGBTQ Ministry

Wil Forrest, Coordinator of Young Adult and Outreach Programs

Sun., Oct. 14: Full Inclusion Sunday 11 am
Plan on joining us for worship, as we celebrate God’s love—and church inclusion—for all.

Sat., Oct. 20: Spiritual Gathering 2–4 pm
All LGBTQ folks and allies are welcome to attend our monthly Spiritual Gathering.
To learn more about our LGBTQ Ministry, contact Wil Forrest at Wil@coh.net or 412.441.3800 x114.

God created you. God loves you.
Be yourself.

Cathedral Rummage Sale: Donations and Volunteers Needed
Have stuff you want to donate? Come find treasures you’d like to buy! ELPC is hosting a Cathedral Rummage Sale in the Social Hall on Sat., Nov. 3, 9 am–2 pm. Sorry, private vendors are not permitted.

Donations can be dropped off Fri., Oct. 19–Fri., Nov 2. Acceptable items include: clothing, housewares, linens, jewelry, toys, books, DVD’s, Christmas decor, and more. Please, no electronics, furniture, or mattresses. Questions? Email Lora at ljazzzbo@aol.com or Tony at overthepond_50@hotmail.com.

If you’d like to volunteer, sign up with Wil Forrest at Wil@coh.net by Sun., Oct. 28.
All proceeds benefit the Building Our Future campaign.

Being a Good Neighbor

by Wil Forrest, Coordinator of Young Adult and Outreach Programs

There is so much to do around our church that we regularly accept help from friends in our community. Not only have we welcomed help from individuals offering community service hours, but also from local organizations, as well as students at the Watson Institute and at the Neighborhood Academy.

This fall we welcome a new partner: the UPMC Vocational Training Center, which is a community-based vocational training facility serving adults with intellectual disabilities. These helpful folks are coming weekly to serve in their community as they care for and prepare the Sanctuary for worship each week.

Let us give thanks for our good neighbors and seek to be good neighbors ourselves!

Read about other service opportunities at ELPC and becoming a member of the weSERVE list at ELPC.church/programs/iSERVE.

ELPC People

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

Prayers
We offer our prayers and condolences to the family and friends of those who recently passed away:
• Mark Benedict, brother of Tim Benedict
• Dave Gilliland’s mother
• Chris Knight, brother-in-law of Polly McQueen
• Gail Noden
• Donna Stephens

Volunteers Needed for Inquirers’ Classes
Do you remember being in your Inquirers’ classes when you decided to join ELPC?

The Membership and Outreach Committee is looking for additional volunteers to help with Inquirers’ classes and new member receptions.

If you’re interested in helping, contact Katie Haas-Conrad at 814.490.1712 or katelyn.m.haas@gmail.com.

Tree Trimming

Don’t be surprised when you see our trees looking as though they have had a bad haircut. Due to excessive growth this year, they need to be trimmed and shaped. This might look severe at first, but over time, this will result in better looking trees.

— Chuck Lukehart,
Property Committee
Cathedral Concerts are Tuning Up

The eighth season of ELPC’s Cathedral Concerts series is slated to present an exciting and diverse lineup of organ, piano, brass, and voice performances in the grandeur of our Ralph Adams Cram-designed Sanctuary and the intimacy of our Chapel.

The season kicks off with Grammy Award-winning artist Nathan Laube in concert on Sun., Oct. 7, 3 pm. Regarded as one of the world’s elite performers, Mr. Laube currently serves as assistant professor of music at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York.

Complimentary tickets are available to ELPC members. See Dr. Edward Alan Moore for details. A freewill offering will be received.

This concert will be presented in cooperation with the Organ Artists Series of Pittsburgh (OAS). As part of his performance, Mr. Laube will premiere a new composition by Craig Phillips, celebrating the OAS’ 40th season.


Office Closed Oct. 8

The ELPC office will be closed on Mon., Oct. 8, in observance of Indigenous Peoples’ Day. The building will open for evening activities at 7 pm.

Blessing of the Animals Service

Plan on joining us for our special Blessing of the Animals service at ELPC on Sat., Oct. 6, 3 pm. Please bring your pets (on leashes!) to the steps on Penn Ave.

A part of the service will be devoted to our pets who are no longer with us, but remain in our hearts and at our sides. You are encouraged to bring a collar or toy to be blessed.

In case of rain, our service will move into the Narthex.

We look forward to welcoming you and your companions! Water will be provided.

“As a diverse community of believers, we strive to follow God—the Creator who calls us, Jesus who teaches us, and the Spirit who empowers us. We show God’s unconditional love by providing a refuge for spiritual growth, ardently pursuing justice, and extending Christ’s radical hospitality to all.”