

# Annual Report 2018

*Full report from the Committees and Groups  
of the East Liberty Presbyterian Church*



**East  
Liberty  
Presbyterian  
Church**  
*The Cathedral of Hope*

## **Centennial Fund**

### **Bryan Lawrence, Chair**

The Centennial Fund was established 100 years ago, on the one hundredth anniversary of the Church, to provide a financial endowment for the Church and the generations to follow. It is overseen by the Centennial Trustees, some of whom are elected by the Session, others by the congregation.

The vast majority of the endowment funds are invested in publicly-traded securities with a target allocation of 70% in stocks (large-cap, small-cap and international stocks) and 30% in bonds/fixed income investments, and are managed by Arthur J. Gallagher & Co. The value of the endowment under management by Gallagher as of December 31, 2018 was \$22,384,887.

The amount under management by Gallagher would be significantly higher but for the fact that the Centennial Fund has (a) loaned the Church \$1,322,000 in connection with the ongoing renovation project, and (b) invested \$200,000 with the P.C.(USA)'s Investment and Loan Program (PILP) in connection with a loan PILP has made to the Church, also in connection with the renovation project.

In addition to the professionally-managed portion of the endowment, the Centennial Fund also had a long-standing investment in Oikocredit, USA, which makes micro-loans in impoverished areas around the world. However, as explained in prior years' reports, that investment of approximately \$572,000 was returned to us in 2017. Of that amount, the Session decided to loan East Liberty Development, Inc. (ELDI) \$250,000 to support ELDI's housing rehabilitation efforts in the East End. The remaining \$322,000 returned by Oikocredit has been earmarked for future international investment. In the meantime, however, it is part of the money that has been loaned to the Church in connection with the renovation project. The Centennial Trustees have also earmarked up to \$1 million for possible investment in the local community pursuant to its Community Investing Criteria. Currently, the Centennial Fund has one such investment – a \$350,000 loan to ELDI, which as of the end of 2018 had an outstanding balance of \$81,061.

Taken together, the total amount of the endowment, including the amounts loaned to the Church for the renovation project and to ELDI, was \$24,237,948, which is down 11.72% from the end of last year, when our total endowment was \$27,455,025.

That portion of the endowment managed by Gallagher had a negative overall return of (4.90%) for 2018, which was down significantly from our 16.37% overall return in 2017. The cumulative annual returns over the past three-year and five-year periods have been 6.10% and 5.50%, respectively. Despite the loss in 2018, the endowment still out-performed its benchmark for the year. It also out-performed the benchmark during the prior five-year period, but was down slightly over the prior 3-year period.

The chair wishes to thank all of the Centennial Trustees for their dedicated service this past year. Centennial Trustees: Mark DeWitt, Gene Harris, Roberta London, Pam Walaski and Bob Starzynski. Staff: The Rev. Dr. Randy Bush, Pastor, and Deborah Marx, Financial Administrator. In addition, the Trustees would especially like to thank Pam Kimmel, the church's former Business Administrator, for her assistance and support over the past 20+ years.

## Deacons

### Doug Cooper and Matt Stuftt, Co-Moderators

2018 Program year was a time of transition with the Board of Deacons. Co-moderator Carol Sharp's term ended, and Doug Cooper was welcomed as the co-moderator with Matt Stuftt. As we completed our period of discerning the ministry programs the Deacons would continue or implement, we continued the Card Ministry, Communion Preparation, and Deacon on Duty and , added ministries such as: Blue Christmas and moved the shelter dinner to January.

-The Card Ministry continues to send out cards to members and friends in times of celebration, illness, and mourning.

- The Communion preparation continued as we assisted in preparation of the elements for the Journey and Sanctuary services, as well as other special communion services throughout the year.

- Deacon on Duty continues to assist during both Journey and Sanctuary services with handling any minor emergencies and maintaining communication between the front desk and the services.

-The Thanksgiving Project continued to provide food assistance for the holiday to families in need. In 2018 we assisted 70 families. The funds are obtained from our annual fundraising sale with our friends at 10,000 Villages.

-Quarterly Fellowship Hour sponsorship will allow our board to connect more with the congregation while providing a time of gathering after worship.

- Blue Christmas - this was the first year that we offered this worship service and time of fellowship at ELPC. The deacons sponsored and organized this service in which over 30 people, some from outside of the congregation, attended. It was a night to allow us to be in ministry with sharing the light of Christ to those who may feel darkness during the holiday season.

-Giving Tree - once again the Deacons facilitated this annual project. We once again set up table with tags at all three weekly services for two weeks to allow congregation members to get a tag for a gift. We were able to provide over 100 gifts to children who may not otherwise have gifts.

Looking back at 2018 was a busy season of preparation and vision for the future of our ministries, especially as we look ahead to our bicentennial year. We give thanks for the members and friends of ELPC and the opportunities to serve this church and our community at large.



Communion Elements—brought forward

## Educational Ministries - Christian Education Sherry Anderson and Heather Lawrence, Co-Chairs

2018 was a year of renewal as we were able to enjoy and learn in new spaces and continue to learn about and grow in our faith after the renovation-inspired changes of 2017.

Vacation Church School returned after a year of Sabbath due to renovations. Although the group was smaller than in the past, children and adults who attended found new learning, new and old friends and enjoyed exploring Jesus' Parables in new spaces. Our theme was "Digging for Treasures: Parables Revealed."

CE individuals, families and staff continue to share in the joys of learning, making new friends, teaching and giving in mission both to our local and global families. Our church school offering for the 2017-18 Church School year was directed toward Open Hand Ministries, and for the 2018-19 Church School Year are collecting our Church School Offering for Casa San Jose, another ministry partner of ELPC addressing needs of migrant families in Pittsburgh. We are grateful for our partnership with Pittsburgh Theological Seminary as we provide internship opportunities to students. Kayln Stewing completed her time with us as an Intern, but joined our staff part time in support of our Educational Ministries.

With the help of a large group of dedicated volunteers, we gladly continued our many and varied programs, such as Sunday morning Church School classes for all ages, Extended Session during worship for young children, providing devotional materials for the seasons of Lent and Advent, Vacation Church School, the all-church picnic in the Fall and the Christmas Pageant, and other opportunities for intergenerational fellowship throughout the year. We have seen tremendous growth in the number of young children attending worship and programs at ELPC and are initiating outreach to families with young children.

The greatest change we're living into is the creation of the "Faith Formation Board" which has been formed to generate synergy among the mission and ministries of the Children and Family Ministries (Formerly known as Christian Education), Youth and Young Adult, Adult Education and Spiritual Life Committees. Comprised of representative voices from each of the above committees, the Faith Formation Board encourages collaboration and diverse voices as we seek to serve the faith formation and spiritual lives of ELPC members and our larger community.

We continue to give thanks to God for all the gifts of 2018 -- children, program spaces and creativity in our ongoing learning about our God and God's role in our church family and community.



Seekers Church School Class



Soul Food Church School Class



Contemporaries Church School Class



Sr. High Church School Class



Elementary Church School Class

## Educational Ministries—Youth Ministries

Eddie Willson, Chair

The year of 2018 was a great year for Youth Ministries. We continue to see growth in all programs and to solidify our purpose and programming in some of our newest ministries. We have enjoyed watching our youth grow and thrive as they learn about the radical hospitality of Jesus. Some highlights from 2018 include:

- **Mission trips** – Our Senior High team of 10 served with West Virginia Ministry or Advocacy and Work camps in August. The group helped homebound folks by building ramps, and decks. The team was inspired by the faith and service of the folks from West Virginia who do this hard work all summer as a way of sharing Christ's love with their neighborhood. We also saw the toll coal mining takes on miners, their families and their communities. Our Middle School team of 21 served as part of Camp Crestfield Mission Possible week. We did a wide variety of service projects including painting cabins at camp and hosting a kindergarten registration carnival for kids in Youngstown.
- **Club 116** – Club 116 continues to see growth, expansion, and success, especially in the High School group. We are grateful for the MANY volunteers who make this ministry possible – those who work directly with the three different age groups, the meal team, and those who provide meals each week.
- **Church School** – The Middle School and High School Sunday School classes continue to be thoughtful and relationship centered spaces for youth to learn the stories of our faith while asking tough questions about God and our world.
- **Food 4 Thought Mentoring** - We have seven mentor-mentee partnerships who are working on developing meaningful relationships, while also exploring the world through food each Thursday night.
- **Doing Good Together** Youth from Rodef Shalom and ELPC continue to partner together once a month to serve in our community.
- **College Student Outreach** – 2018 was another year of trying to bridge the gap between youth life and college life. We sent care packages to many of our youth alumni away at college and even hosted a college dinner over winter break. This small but mighty ministry is becoming a staple of our outreach and we hope to see it grow and flourish in 2019.
- **Tween Events** – The youth gather monthly on a Friday night to bowl, play mini golf, play basketball or craft and go on an annual retreat at Crestfield. It is a pleasure to see this group of children who are growing into young adults bring their high level of joy and energy into everything they do.
- **30 Hour Famine** – The 30 hour famine was a huge success again this year. We had more than 30 participants and the money we raised went to support Open Hands ministry.
- **Retreats** – While the Fall retreat at Crestfield had to be rethought last minute due to bad weather and no electricity at Camp ... Middle and High school students were flexible as we worshiped, played, served at the Greater Pittsburgh Food bank, and went ice skating in the city instead.
- **Staff Transitions**– We want to recognize Wil Forrest for the amazing work he has done with Youth and Young Adults for several years. We have seen tremendous success and growth thanks to his hard work and dedication. We wish Wil all the best as he takes on a new role in the Church, and a new chapter begins in his Faith Journey. And while we are sad to see Wil leave this position, we are excited to welcome Kelli Booher into that role. Kelli is already diving into the Young Adult Ministry with a zeal and passion that can't be matched. We look forward to seeing her continue to carry the baton brilliantly.

YAYA Committee: Damon Bethea, Lora Bethea, Cami Teacoach, Eddie Willson, Pam Walaski, David Carl, Nicole Molinaro-Karaczun, Linda Stephens-Benedict, Nathaniel Morley, Sonya-Marie Morley, Gloria Ritchey, Isaac Degenholtz.

Youth Ministry Staff: Kelli Booher, Sara Hackett, Rev. Heather Schoenewolf, Kalyn Stewing, Anthony Williams



Confirmation Class



## Educational Ministries—Young Adult Ministry (YAM)

Wil Forrest, YAM Coordinator

The Young Adult Ministry (YAM) seeks to welcome, connect, involve, and enrich folks aged 18-40 years old through a variety of programmatic opportunities and through meaningful relationships. The young adult spring Christian Education church school was led by different young adults addressing topics of their own choosing, such as learning about missionary Lottie Moon, loving our neighbor, considering rainbows, and more. During the fall we had a class on radical hospitality hosted by More Light Presbyterians Executive Director Alex Patchin McNeill.

### Some of the ministry highlights from 2018:

\*Events took us to sing karaoke, to share our stories at our Camp Crestfield retreat, to have a Pittsburgh Potluck, to attend Art All Night, to share fondue with friends, and much more!

\*Our summer was busy as we ate food from Uzbekistan, celebrated the Summer Solstice, served dinner at a feeding program in Brookline, bowled with new friends, watched movies, and hosted games at Black Pride Pittsburgh.

\*We also hosted a summertime interactive multigenerational roundtable discussion - *The Great Exchange: The Great Outdoors*.

\*One of the highlights of the year was when we co-hosted a packed “Moth”-styled open mic night with Repair the World centered on the theme of “second chances.”

\*We continued important partnerships with TRAIL monthly, with Happy Wanderers as we went to the Pittsburgh Glass Center, and with First United Methodist’s Worship Jam as we hosted our eighth annual drum circle.

\*Young adult-managed ministries continued: two YAMs Facebook pages continued and monthly ushering service opportunities at worship (with gratitude to Nick Genger-Boeldt and Alyssa Carroll).

I offer my sincerest gratitude to all the many members of our congregation who supported the Young Adult Ministry this year. Further, I am excited about the recent change to the ministry as Kelli Booher has assumed YAM leadership late in the fall. Blessings to her and all the wonderful young adults who make up this special community!

Respectfully submitted by Wil Forrest, YAM Coordinator until December 2018



## **Membership and Outreach Committee**

**Katie Haas-Conrad, Nick Genger-Boeldt, and Scott Richardson-Eckes – Co-Chairs**

Membership and Outreach (M&O) had an exciting year, with 65 new members and friends joining our congregation in 2018. The committee provided support for 5 series of Inquirers' classes, hosted a reception during the Fellowship Hour on each of the Sundays when new members joined, and hosted both a new member luncheon, a new member brunch and a new member chili dinner during the year.

In addition to these new member events, Membership and Outreach served as the coordinating committee for the Church Life Sampler, which was well attended in terms of sponsored tables (24), participants (200 attendees), and visitors (9). M&O also hosted the Summer Celebration of Service Picnic for Volunteers (~50 Participants).

This year we served as the coordinating group for a 6-week workshop called Healthy BP for All. Healthy BP for All combined two national programs: American Heart Association's with Check – Change - Control program and the Cooking Matters program with 412 Food Rescue. We had 16 participants including ELPC members and members from the community. The group felt they learned a lot about health and nutrition, how to make healthy food choices, when shopping for groceries, and how to prepare healthy meals. They also commented on learning about spices and herbs they never knew existed, prior to attending the classes. The instructors went over the importance of reading labels on their food when shopping for groceries. They enjoyed the food shopping tour to Aldi's, all participants were given a \$10.00 gift card, to teach them how to shop healthy on a budget. They enjoyed food preparation in the classroom, eating what they had prepared, and taking the ingredients home to prepare the same dishes. Take home written material was given out to reinforce what they had learned that day in class, when watching the videos, followed by a Q&A session. One of the outside participants lost 20 pounds, and there were also reports of participants blood pressure coming down. On the last day, all participants were given blood pressure cuffs, a cookbook, an apron and a \$25.00 gift card for Aldi's. The class served a purpose of giving the participants tools to have strategies in reducing their blood pressure and living healthier lifestyles.

Membership and Outreach is also home to our Church Tour program. This year we hosted 26 Open Church Tours and 12 Private tours (including university and high school groups, as well as church groups coming from several hours away). We have 6 experienced tour guides (Carla Depperman, Steve Evrard, Penn Hackney, Bob Starzynski, Thomas Morton, and Tim VanFleet). 342 members and individuals from the community participated in tours this year. The tours not only allow the congregation to share the magnificence and beauty of the Gothic and Romanesque architecture, it provides a forum to discuss the Christian Faith, Presbyterianism, and the diverse body of believers who share the space, embracing each other with radical hospitality. Moving forward, the Tour Guide Team is looking to expand the tour schedule, revise the self-guided tour and complete the outline for the new Exterior Church tour this Spring.

M&O is also the home for Happy Wanderers, a group offering fellowship opportunities for seniors. 10 Happy Wanderer events took place in 2018, including outings to Shakespeare Castle, Green Gables Mountain Playhouse, Lamp Lighter and Apple Hill Playhouse, Glass Factory, Somerset Oakhurst Tea Room and a Christmas Dinner at Rocky's (~12 participants per outing).

In 2018, there were 50 members participating in 8 Connections Dinner Groups, informal fellowship groups which meet every 4-8 weeks in homes for a simple meal and great conversation.

Other active groups within M&O include: LGBTQ, Toymakers, and the Knitting and Sewing Groups, all of which had a productive year (updates elsewhere in this report).

Finally, advertising, newsletters, and website communications are housed within the Membership and Outreach Committee. In 2018, our Facebook page grew to include 1,940 friends. If you haven't already done so, please Like us on Facebook!

Members: Emma Odim, Janet Pollard, Lynne Chadwick, Linda Harrington, Carla Coles, Gloria Clark, Gwen Puza, Sue Bailey, Carla Depperman, Martha DeMarzi, Shirley Fair, Katelyn Haas-Conrad<sup>1</sup>, Andrea DeVries<sup>1</sup> (outgoing), Nick Genger-Boeldt<sup>1</sup>, Scott Richardson-Eckes<sup>1</sup>, Mary Evrard<sup>2</sup>, Sonja-Marie Morley<sup>2</sup> (outgoing), Elaine Philips<sup>2</sup>, Randy Bush<sup>3</sup>, Jim DiGiorgio<sup>3</sup> (Incoming), Wil Forrest<sup>3</sup>  
<sup>1</sup>Elder representative <sup>2</sup>Deacon representative <sup>3</sup>M&O staff



New Members & Friends joining in October, 2018



New Members & Friends joining in May, 2018



Adult Baptism of New Member, Delenn Fingerlow



Church Life Sampler Event—2018



## MEMBERSHIP & OUTREACH COMMITTEE—iSERVE

Wil Forrest, 2018 Coordinator

Jim DiGiorgio, 2019 Coordinator

The iSERVE Ministry has had another busy year in organizing volunteers for a variety of service opportunities both inside and outside ELPC. iSERVE's partnership with the Membership & Outreach Committee developed as we again shared programmatic efforts this year: the Summer Celebration of Service picnic, the Church Life Sampler, the New Member Host program and the hospitality ministry. The Summer Celebration of Service celebrated the work of its 50 participants. The Church Life Sampler had 24 different ministries represented during this year's event. The New Member Host program pairs established members of ELPC with new members to assist them in connecting and acclimating. There are currently about 60 new member hosts that are active. In 2018 we welcomed 16 friends and 49 new members to the ELPC family who all have hosts. iSERVE had a hand in recruiting, training, managing and supporting over 400 servants this year in various ministries serving ELPC and the community.

Donations received this year continued to be an important part of our ministry. Each week we receive at least two donations from La Gourmandine in Lawrenceville (bread, pastries, sandwiches, soups) and two donations of flowers from Trader Joe's. We utilize these food donations in the programmatic life of our church as well as with multiple outside partners who enable us to share food directly with hungry individuals and families in the community in addition to feeding folks in the ELPC family. Many thanks to Michele Bossers and Peg Patterson who manage the food donations, Diane Jackson who delivers the flowers, and Jon Nelson and Michelle Bard who deliver the food donations.

The Congregational Care Team continued to offer short-term assistance to congregation and community members in need. This small team of compassionate people make a big impact as they have helped people after surgeries, they have supplied transportation to important medical appointments to folks who could not drive, and they have done many other helpful things to show love and support to our church family. Many thanks to Pat Krimmel and David Phillips who coordinate this team of dedicated individuals.

I offer my sincerest gratitude to all the many members of our congregation and community who actively supported the iSERVE ministry this program year. I am excited about the recent changes to this ministry as Jim DiGiorgio has assumed leadership of the iSERVE ministry. May we all continue to serve God with energy and love!

Respectfully submitted by Wil Forrest, iSERVE Coordinator until December 2018.



iServe Picnic

## MEMBERSHIP & OUTREACH COMMITTEE—LGBTQ

Wil Forrest, LGBTQ Coordinator

ELPCs Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning (LGBTQ) Ministry has thrived this year again as it continued to welcome self-identified LGTBQ Christians and their allies. In addition to our monthly spiritual gatherings, we have reached out to others in the community through an increasing amount of events promoting full inclusion and celebrating God's love for all. While most Ministry participants are ELPC members or friends, we still steadily draw a significant number of participants who are members at other churches or have no church home, but come to ELPC due to the welcome and acceptance they feel as part of this Ministry. It is a place of connection and sanctuary for many.

After some self-examination this year, members of the ministry look forward to passing much of the leadership of our public advocacy events with the Full Inclusion Subcommittee (of the Justice Committee) allowing us to put more of our time into being a ministry focused on member education and spirituality.

### Some ministry highlights from 2018:

- \*We began and still continue a series of personal testimonies as members of the ministry share their faith journeys at the monthly spiritual gatherings.
- \*Through trainings and identifying pins, we are seeking to promote the use of preferred pronouns in regular discourse in our church community as to be welcoming and inclusive of all.
- \*We intentionally planned and expanded ELPC's participation in the Pride events throughout the year allowing us to reflect God's love to many people and send a message of inclusion to the people of our city.
- \*In June, we hosted booths at both Delta Foundation's PrideFest and at the Mayor's Pride on the Square events. We also marched in the People's Pride and Delta Pride Marches.
- \*In July, we again worked with Black Pride Pittsburgh to co-host their Family Game Day at ELPC.
- \*In September, we co-sponsored the TransPride Pittsburgh Conference as we hosted a welcome table and provided lunch for the participants.
- \*In December, we had our annual retreat at the home of Michele and Henk Bossers and we focused on Advent and expectant waiting, and were led in worship and activities by a talented guest leader named Jenn Bender.
- \*Continued Ministry visibility was offered by a bookmark in the pews with an inclusiveness pledge and ministry information, announcements in the bulletin every week, colorful tie dyed Ministry t-shirts, tabling events, etc.
- \*We sought to be hospitable to new members of our community as well as to Renaissance City Choir members, Grove City College students, More Light Presbyterian board members, and other members of the LGBTQIA community who we were able to connect with this year in and around ELPC.

I offer my sincerest gratitude to all the many members of our congregation who supported the LGBTQ Ministry this year. I look forward to serving the congregation, our community, and God in this new year and beyond.

Respectfully submitted by Wil Forrest, LGBTQ Ministry Coordinator.



## MEMBERSHIP & OUTREACH COMMITTEE

### Other sub-groups - Toymakers and Knitting & Sewing Groups

#### TOYMAKERS - Mike Anderson Coordinator

The ELPC Toymakers produced about 200 wooden toys in 2018. The toys were distributed to Sojourner House and the Women's Shelter of Pittsburgh. Some toys have been kept in reserve for ELPC members to distribute on mission trips.

Our group last year took on our most complex task to date, two dozen puzzles, which we offered to the congregation at our annual sale. That sale netted about \$700 and will pay for repairs to our scroll saw and all the wood and paint we'll need in 2019. Many thanks for the congregation's always generous support.



#### KNITTING & SEWING GROUP – Diane Jackson, Coordinator

The sewing group continues to supply bags for the Living in Liberty project sponsored by Pittsburgh Presbytery. We also make dignity robes for cancer patients, angel gowns for still born infants and sudden infant deaths, and scarves for women released from incarceration and their families. We have sent some dresses to South America with a visiting teacher and stand ready to make more if mission trips by our congregation or friends request them.

The knitting group continues the tradition of offering afghans to our high school graduates each year. We also make prayer shawls to comfort those facing illness or hardship or sorrow. We make baby afghans to celebrate the baptism of our youngest members. We have continued to knit or crochet both infant hats for the Littlest Angels project and plastic mats for the homeless.

Thanks go to the congregation for the donation of materials, notions, and yarns for these items. We invite all ages, genders and range of expertise to join us. We also offer our efforts on any projects that may be within our abilities.

## Mission Board

### Emily Rosenthal – Chair

In 2018, The Mission Board (MB) focused on a year-long series on systemic racism while also attending to the responsibilities of funding and supporting mission ministry initiatives.

Changes in the board: Michele Bossers stepped down after many years of faithful service; the board welcomed Tim Van Fleet, Session Elder, Susan Spangler, Deacon's representative, and Frank Bauerle, at large member who serves as ELPC's representative on the Open Hand Ministries Board.

Facing Systemic Racism (FSR) was a year-long series developed by a committed FSR planning team made up of interested congregation members, MB members and ELPC members of the Presbytery's Anti-Racism Transformation Team (ARTT). Outside speakers and FSR planning team members lead the event topics that began with a broad review of systemic racism, then focused down on the individual's role, impact and responsibility. Each month from April through December a range of 55 – 90 congregation and community members gathered for a pot luck supper and thoughtful discussion. This series was well received and well attended. A continuation of this series is currently being planned for 2019.

The Mission Board continues to financially support organizations, ministries both locally and globally who carry out the mission of helping those in need or times of crisis and conflict. In 2018 it updated and revised the Mission Board Funding Guidelines.

Other activities:

Coordinating October Mission Month: Weekly Sunday event topics: ELDI community update; Full Inclusion Sunday; 25<sup>th</sup> Year Celebration of our Partnership with Balaka CCAP (Malawi), and immigration issues and advocacy.

Chapel Market Free Clothing Ministry: Supported this ministry comprised of 21 steady volunteers and lead by Gerald McClendon. About 330 customers are registered. Only seasonally appropriate clothes are available. Regular requests were made to the congregation for donations of clothing, specific men's clothing and toiletries. Chapel Market welcomes each Monday 25-60 shoppers; a lesser amount shop on Thursday evenings. We have noticed an increase of local social service agencies sending clients to shop, including recent refugees.

Ecumenical Advocacy Days Conference, Washington DC; sponsored a congregation member to attend and report out this conference and PC (USA) Office of Public Witness pre conference. The theme was immigration.

Much of the work of the Mission Board lies in its three committees: Peace, Justice, and Neighbors.

Mission Board Members:

Frank Bauerle (at large, OHM Board representative); Michele Bossers (at-large); Carol Chonoska (Justice Chair); Peta Harrigan Cole (PW Representative); Ryan Booher (At Large); Jim Eng (Neighbors Co-Chair); Emily Rosenthal (Mission Board Chair); Susan Spangler (Deacons representative); Tim Van Fleet (Neighbors Co-Chair); Jon Walker (Peace Chair); Rev. Patrice Fowler Searcy (staff)



Chenoa, Jose Luis and Leandro Claire



25th Anniversary of our Partnership with Balaka CCAP (Malawi) and ELPC

## Mission - Justice Committee

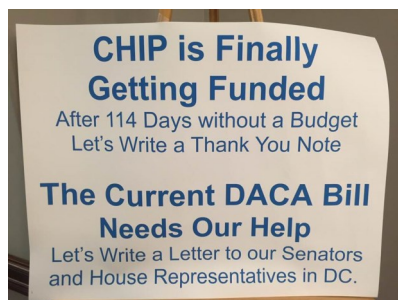
Carol Chonoska, Chairperson

Pittsburgh Presbytery passed an Eco-justice resolution proposed by the Peacemaking Team; a commitment by 130+ congregations to examine their own energy usage, implement money and energy saving retrofitting and consider carbon free energy wherever possible. Following their lead in environmental stewardship, we provide monthly energy tips in Reaching Out, and held our own “Climate Reality Conference” on global warming and “Solar Power in your Home”. Prior to Earth Day we began a ribbon art project to engage members of all ages in thinking about the parts of our earth that we really appreciate, and would miss if we were to lose them. We also focused on exposing the inequity of our country’s response to environmental damage in communities of color and poverty with a film called, “Fenceline” about factory-caused air pollution in Norco Louisiana, followed by a book study of Amity & Prosperity, the story of the effects of fracking on the communities of Amity and Prosperity in southwestern PA. Our committee also pledged to use and wash dishes for all of the food we serve at our events.

We wanted to respond to the increasing hostility toward refugees and immigrants in the Pittsburgh area and the country in general. We began with advocacy through a letter writing campaign to our senators responding to DACA. Most recently we have begun to work with Casa San Jose through their new office in our building. We will begin training congregation members in the basics of English conversation with non-English speakers. We anticipate forming relationships with people who come through our doors in need of radical hospitality.

We have been fortunate to have 4 volunteers to work as mentors with the HOPE program at the Allegheny County Jail. This is a difficult, but heartfelt relationship. We need more volunteers. We were also fortunate to have the opportunity to help sponsor a retreat weekend through KAIROS Outside Pennsylvania for women who have loved ones incarcerated in prison.

These are just a few of the ways we have addressed justice issues this year. Carol Chonoska, chair  
Members: Sherry Anderson, Karen Beasley, Michele Bossers, John Buckley, Courtney Chaplain, Carla Coles, Lucy De Barbaro, Katelyn Dougherty, Nancy Gippert, Becky Gloninger, Linda Harrington, Nancy Heastings, Megan Leisher, Judy Mancini, Cynthia Peterson, Janet Pollard, Vivienne Selia, Kay Shissler, Susan Spangler, Beth Urbaitis, Evalynn Welling



## Mission - Neighbors Committee

James Eng, Tim Van Fleet, committee co-chairs

The Reverend Patrice L. Fowler-Searcy, Staff

The Neighbors Committee is comprised of congregational members who wish to support local community initiatives that help people who are underserved in Pittsburgh's East End. Through prayerful and thoughtful deliberation, the committee responds to local requests for assistance with volunteers from the congregation and with financial support.

Here us a list of 2018 ministries and accomplishments.

1. **East End Cooperative Ministry (EECM):** ELPC members served dinners to the residents at EECM's homeless shelter several times a month, and hot breakfasts on the second, fourth and fifth (new addition this year) Sunday of each month. In the fall of this year, members of the Neighbors committee and the Mission Board met with the leadership of EECM to pursue other collaborative volunteer opportunities to serve. Stay tuned!
2. **Open Hand Ministries (OHM):** ELPC member volunteers attended and provided food for OHM Circles dinners, and sponsored two families pursuing homeownership. ELPC volunteers were involved in the rehabilitation of three houses on Rural Street (completed this year), Fairmont Street and North Aiken street. ELPC members also volunteered in fund-raising for OHM through the Pittsburgh Marathon.
3. **Chapel Market:** The market continued its ministry to provide free clothing to neighbors in need on Mondays and the first Thursday evenings. There are many people who make this operation work, both up front and behind the scenes, and we look forward to continued service with more volunteers from our congregation.
4. **Southwest Goodwill Interview Go-bags:** The SW Goodwill agency started an initiative to provide "interview go-bags" to individuals who are preparing for job interviews and applications. Through coordination of the committee, toiletry items were purchased for the bags, and children from ELPC's Christian Education program assembled 60 bags that were delivered in the spring and the fall.
5. **Larimer Healing Garden:** The garden, a vision of Miss Betty, a local resident and advocate, is located on Meadow Street and will serve as a neighborhood sanctuary for physical and spiritual healing for the Larimer community. In addition to a financial donation from the committee, children from ELPC's Christian Education program assisted in a Saturday garden group work-day.
6. **Ongoing Community Support and Opportunities:** We continue to support other community initiatives and agencies such as The Neighborhood Academy, Arts in the Summer Garden, Partners 4 Work's Choice Neighborhoods Project, OHM Family Fund care.

Members: James Eng, Tim Van Fleet, Judy Menk, Tom Menk, Nancy Heastings, Pat Krimmel, Emily Rosenthal, Ted Cmarada, Susan Spangler, Henry Petrilli, Jon Nelson, Pastor Patrice Fowler-Searcy.



Open Hand Ministries



# MISSION - PEACE COMMITTEE

## The Rev. Patrice L. Fowler-Searcy – Staff

The Peace Committee seeks to promote peace in our local and global communities through prayer, education, involvement and advocacy in response to the Gospel.

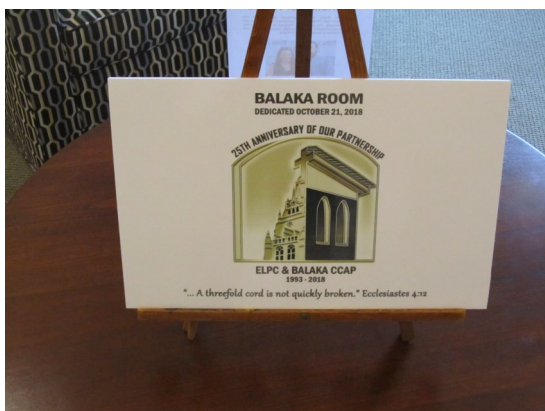
### 2018 In Review

- This past year has seen violence, conflict and division both at home and abroad. We continued the discussion on gun control, Africa and the Middle East and the plight of the Kurds and Rohingya refugees.
- Hosted a forum on the problems in Sudan and South Sudan – *Crises Unresolved*
- Participated in the church-wide sampler
- Participated in the Mission Summer Film Series viewing the movie *White Man's Burden* as a continuation of the ongoing Systemic Racism series
- The highlight of the year was the celebration of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the partnership between ELPC and Balaka CCAP in Malawi. A new covenant was signed by the Rev. Dr. Bush and Elder Derby Makwalero from our sister church. The gathering space on the first floor was dedicated as the “Balaka Room”.
- Continued our financial support for Malawi and South Sudan (International Partnership) and Forman Christian College in Pakistan. In addition we made contributions to ACROSS, National Religious Campaign Against Torture and the Beating Guns Tour.

The Peace Committee will continue to advocate on behalf of peace issues as they arise and endorse/participate with other peacemaking groups throughout the year. All are welcome to our bi-monthly meetings.

Peace Committee Members: Peta Harrigan Cole, Derek Harrigan, John Jordan, Pepo Mazingi, Gwen Puza, Kay Shissler, Ron Stone and Russ Walker. Staff: The Rev. Patrice L. Fowler-Searcy

Respectfully Submitted  
Peta Harrigan Cole, Peace Committee Shepherd



## Personnel Committee

### Brittany Krieger and Mark DeWitt co-chairs

The Personnel Committee is responsible for managing the workforce of ELPC by overseeing personnel practices and policies while also supporting staff well-being and development.

Did you know that ELPC employs over 50 people? All of which support the functions of the church that allow ELPC ministry and mission to stay in focus. As previously stated, the staff at ELPC is the backbone of this church and in 2018, that great foundation and support was apparent. Not only was the staff dedicated to seeing the church grounds through the evolution and completion of the renovations, everyone also showed flexibility in their roles and job duties to ensure continuity throughout their functions.

1. A long-term Facility Management Ad Hoc Committee was formed to manage the shifting expectations of the staff with the goals and projects of the Property committee. The forward thinking of this committee established effective management of the church grounds and the new HVAC system.
2. We said goodbye to Pam Kimmel, who retired after working at ELPC for over 20 years as Business Administrator. Throughout Pam's pending retirement, she worked to make sure that there was knowledge sharing and the possibility of a seamless transition to her successor. The Personnel Committee capped off Pam's time as an employee at ELPC by helping to celebrate her. Pastor Patrice and the Personnel committee invited her, her family and the congregation to celebrate and thank her for her dedication, energy and time leading, coordinating and managing the staff.
3. The Personnel Committee recruited for several staff positions including roles that named Wil Forrest as the new Director of Church Operations and Coordinator of LGBTQ Ministry, welcomed Debbie Banton as Facilities Administrator, and welcomed Kelli Booher as Coordinator of Youth and Young Adult Ministries
4. The Personnel Committee worked to revise several job descriptions to align the staff duties with the evolving needs of the church. This led to increased responsibilities for many members of the staff including Paul Martin, Allen Miller, Sara Hackett, Jim DiGiorgio, Karly Threets and Deborah Marx.

Overall, 2018 was a significant year of change – not only for the church structure but also for the church staff that supports and manages the operations of ELPC. 2018 welcomed new faces to the church staff and said goodbye to familiar faces. All of this was done while managing shifts of responsibilities, supervisors, and the facility.

The Personnel Committee would like to thank every member of the staff for their wonderful work and flexibility throughout 2018.

Committee members: Diana Armstrong, Bill Buchanan, Lynne Chadwick, Mark Dewitt (co-chair), Emma Johnson, Brittney Krieger (co-chair), Chris Martin, Steve Massey. Staff: The Rev Dr. Randy Bush and Wil Forrest.



Pam Kimmel's Retirement Celebration



Welcome to Debbie Banton,  
our new Facilities Administrator



Welcome to Kelli Booher,  
Coordinator for Youth &  
Young Adult Ministries



Wil Forrest, New Position as  
Director of Church Operations  
& Coordinator of LGBTQ Ministry



## Presbyterian Women

### Sherry Anderson - Moderator

For more than 200 years, Presbyterian Women have strengthened the Presbyterian Church, played a major role in sharing the good news of Jesus Christ and witnessed to the promise of God's kingdom. Following are some of our activities in 2018 that nurtured our faith, supported the mission of the church worldwide, worked for justice and peace and built an inclusive and caring community of women:

- Through May of 2018, we continued our bible study "Cloud of Witnesses" on the first Monday and Tuesday of each month. Our evening Bible study on the first Monday of each month continues to have a steady turnout. In September, we began "God's Promise: I am with You" an exploration of the many times and places in which life becomes difficult, and God affirms God's steady, strong presence in all situations.
- In April, we came together for our overnight retreat at Camp Crestfield. Kimberly Gonxhe, director of the Metro Urban Institute at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, led us in a challenging exploration of gender and women in the church, historically and currently. Good fellowship, church camp food, group hikes, warming by a fire provided by Carol and JoAnn Chonoska, and good snacking for the whole 24 hours supported our feelings of sisterhood in our faith in God and Jesus the Christ.
- Presbyterian Women thank the congregation for your generous support of our special missions. In November, you contributed over \$3000 to the **Thank Offering**, which supports start-up ministries to address peace and justice. These gifts supplemented PW's annual mission budget of more than \$20,000. The Presbytery **diaper drive** has been an ongoing success, for which we thank members of the congregation. Your faithful donations have brought health and wellness to many of our community's youngest and most vulnerable members. The Presbytery project, "**Living in Liberty**," continued in 2018 with the sewing of tote bags for women whose lives are affected by poverty and human trafficking. Members of ELPC's PW group have been active in working with individuals in the care centers provided by Living in Liberty.
- In December we began the challenge of seeking a new moderator and exploring ways to make Presbyterian Women viable and strong for all the women of ELPC.

We look forward to seeing all women of the church participating in our activities. Each of us is a member. We hope you are able to join us for bible study and in upcoming events. For information speak with one of the members of our leadership team: Sherry Anderson (Moderator), Peta Harrigan Cole (Secretary), and Pat Kimmel (Treasurer), and at-large members Kay Shissler, Evalynn Welling, Jan Pressman, and Elaine Phillips.



## PROPERTY

### Charles Krimmel, Chair

As an exciting closing activity to 2018, we purchased a new van for the church to replace the well-worn old van and ensure safety and comfort for the many groups that use this vehicle! Please be sure to join in an outing soon to experience the new van first hand. We will be festooning the new van exterior in the new year with the ELPC information and logo to announce and celebrate our presence as we travel the local and distant regions alike. Work on the Building Our Future renovation reached substantial completion at the end of 2018 and signifies a major transformation complete in the ongoing life of the church. All spaces are back in use and serving the mission of the church with much delight.

We continued diligence in the standard ongoing maintenance of the physical property with repairs to the exterior masonry and infilling stair railing spindles to ensure safety for all. The commercial dishwasher in the Social Hall kitchen was replaced as it had reached the end of its serviceable life.

A joint special temporary joint subcommittee was formed with a few members of both Property and Personnel committees to develop job descriptions for the new facilities staff as part of staff restructuring and additional hiring.

Additionally, the committee obtained a new insurance Appraisal on the property and issued Request for Proposal (RFP) to multiple insurance companies as part of evaluating needs for any changes to the churches insurance policy prior to renewal later in the upcoming year. Much thanks is due the Landscaping Team who has worked diligently throughout the year keeping the grounds, courtyard and building beautiful and welcoming. Thanks also to the exemplary work and care of the staff in making this another successful year in stewardship of the building and resources.



## SESSION

**John Buckley, Clerk of Session**

**Lenore Williams, Deputy Clerk of Session**

The Session is ELPC's governing council. It currently consists of 25 Elders elected by the Congregation and our three pastors. It meets for regular and substantive meetings most months and often has special meetings to receive new members and friends or do other specific business associated with its governing role. The body, excluding the pastors and youth elders, also is Board of the Corporation.

In addition to basic governance activities, such as administering membership, reviewing the work of the Deacons and the various committees of the church and directing the use of the Centennial Fund, the Session discusses and deliberates how our faith in God and witness to Christ's love can be incarnated in the ongoing ministry of ELPC.

Strategic activity of special note in 2018 included:

- 1. Holding and following up from a session retreat.** Specifically: Session identified a need for ELPC to foster and model "wholeness" in our worship and program life in 2018, including more story-sharing; creation of a center for wholeness; and hiring an engagement coordinator. Although these ideas weren't carried out exactly as discussed, progress in taking a greater approach to wholeness was made in 2018.
- 2. Oversee the Building our Future work and finances.** Specifically: Session regularly reviewed and discussed the plans and progress, especially on the use of diverse people on the project and the funding and expenses of the project. Great success was achieved in all key areas and some additional notable work was able to be added to the project (steeple lighting, additional bathrooms and more energy improvements).
- 3. Review and approve key documents:** Specifically: Significant revised by-laws and articles of incorporation will be presented at the annual meeting, a new child safety policy was developed and approved and one regarding sexual misconduct is currently being developed.
- 4. Preparing for Bicentennial.** Specifically: Session developed a series of activities related to the 2019 bicentennial. The activities will engage all members, as well as the community, celebrate our past and promote our future, happen inside and outside the church and in our community, feature past leaders, multiple choirs and musical groups and our children. The overall theme will focus on the past, current and future strength of our radical hospitality.



## Spiritual Life and Taizé Ministries

**Kathy Glass, Chair**

The Spiritual Life Committee has responsibility for both the weekly Wednesday evening Taizé service and the Spiritual Life Ministries of the Church. The Rev. Mary Lynn Callahan is the staff person for the committee.

Taizé continues to be a place of peace and healing as well as a model for offering the ministry of the Taizé Community in the United States. In addition to the regular weekday services, there were special processions offered for Epiphany and All Saints, an Ash Wednesday service and, again this year during Holy Week, the Taizé Service became a **Stations of the Cross Walk** using the music and prayers of Taizé with the scriptures detailing the death of Jesus. Cathedral Yoga prior to Taizé continued to draw folks who might never have entered our doors as well as a steady base group. We also continue to **livestream the audio portion of the Taize service with added digital images so that people could “attend” Taizé without being here.**

The Spiritual Life Committee offers a variety of ministries all focused on providing tools and resources to encourage and enhance the spiritual life. Ongoing ministries include:

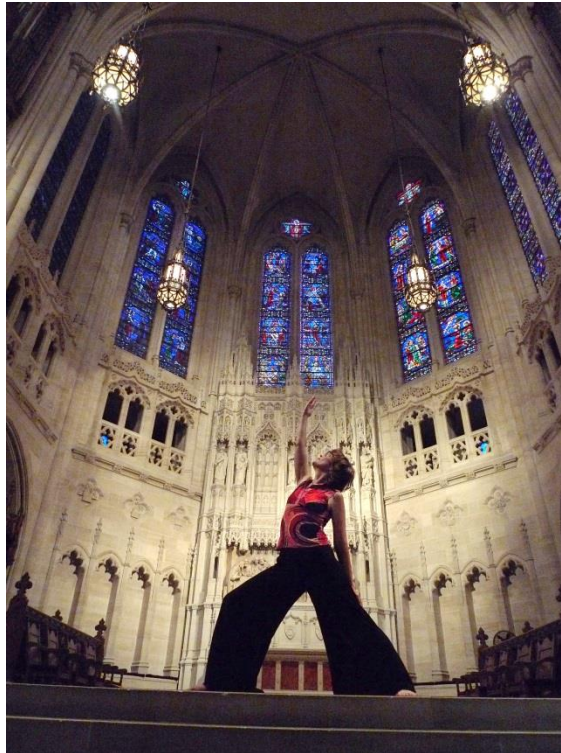
- The **Labyrinth ministry**
- **Spiritual Direction** offered by Rev. Callahan
- An ongoing discussion group on the relationship of **Science and Theology**
- Monthly Journey Dance
- The **Prayer and Meditation Room which, now houses both a weekly Tuesday Centering Prayer meeting and a weekly Thursday Qigong and Mindfulness Meditation practice.**

In addition to these ongoing offerings, the committee plans and offers many other opportunities to the congregation and the community surrounding us:

- Programming associated with our ongoing 2017–2018 theme on the place of Sound in the Spiritual Life:
  - An Interfaith Panel
  - An experience of Jewish Chant with David Goldstein
  - Consciousness, Creative Expression, and Physical Morphology with Michael Dodin
  - Ashley O’Hara led us as we explored Kirtan, a form of devotion found in the Bhakti tradition of Hinduism.
  - An Introduction to Gregorian Chant led by Justin Weilmann from Duquesne University.
  - Christian Spirituality & Sound led by our own Dr. Edward Alan Moore
- In the fall, we began our new focus on the importance of the Spiritual Life for building resilience with Buddhism and Christianity.
- We began a new quarterly discussion for Heretics, Doubters and Other Saints
- There was a full day retreat around Science and Theology
- A weekend off-campus Silent Retreat for those who wanted to go deeper in their spiritual life
- And to close out the year there was both a Mini-Advent Retreat on the Incarnation and a Year-End Examen Mini-Retreat.

Many thanks to the members of the Spiritual Life Committee: Margaret Bacco; Kathy Glass (Chair); Barbara Griffin; Linda Harrington; Jon Nelson; Carla Coles; Susan Spangler and Dawn Morgenstern.

Submitted by the Rev. Mary Lynn Callahan, Director of Spiritual Life Ministries and Pastor of Taizé.



# Stewardship

## Dee Giffin Flaherty, Chair

The theme of the 2019 Stewardship campaign is “Radical Hospitality”. We are guided by the words from Romans 12: 13, 18, “Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers...And so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.” Our beautifully remodeled church well positions us to respond to the needs of saints and stranger. Our political unrest and local trauma shout for the importance of radical hospitality as we open our hearts and our doors to all.

We, as a congregation, have responded generously to the call to pledge. Both our total pledges and the dollar amount pledged are higher than in any other year. Our goal is to increase the pledged and undesignated gifts by 5% over last year’s budgeted amount, which would require a total of \$785,000. As of January 24, we have done very well with the total amount pledged of \$725,500. It is our considered expectation that the remaining \$59,500 will be forthcoming as we continue to receive new pledges and gifts.

We are grateful for this opportunity to extend God’s love to all.

Respectfully,  
The Stewardship Committee  
Dee Giffin Flaherty  
Laura Ristau  
David Carl  
Tiffany Sudar  
Dan Zander  
Lorraine Commeret



## Worship, Music and The Arts Committee

### Steve Evrard, Chair

In 2018, the Worship, Music and the Arts Committee strived to offer church members, friends and visitors a welcoming and uplifting worship experience, and opportunities for spiritual nourishment through the mediums of music and other arts. Highlights of the past year include:

#### Worship

- The church experienced continued strong attendance in 2018. The weekly worship attendance averaged 436 participants.
- The committee gratefully acknowledges the efforts of many volunteers in serving to support our worship services, music and art and tours of the church. These include:
  - \* Ushers/Greeters – coordinated by Sherry Anderson and Captains Laura Ristau, David Carl and Carla Depperman
  - \* Beadles – coordinated by Matt Stufft
  - \* Acolytes & Crucifers – coordinated by Sara Hackett
  - \* Communion Servers – coordinated by Steve Evrard
  - \* Communion Preparation – completed and coordinated by the Board of Deacon.
  - \* The Journey Worship Committee – Chuck Lukehart, Judy Roberts, Steve Evrard, and Lora and Damon Bethea
  - \* ELPC Tour Guides – Tim Van Fleet, Penn Hackney, Carla Depperman, Steve Evrard, Tom Morton, and Bob Starzynski
- The committee also would like to recognize the work of a small committee of church members and friends who advised on and assisted in installing art work as part of the renovation project. Those volunteers included Mary Beth Van Fleet, Suzy Flynn, Tim Engelhardt and Bill Wade.
- The 4<sup>th</sup> annual Blessing of the Animals service was conducted on October 6<sup>th</sup>.
- Monitors for display of church announcements and videos for worship services were installed in the Chancel and the back portion of the Sanctuary. This provided accessibility for the choir and all worshippers.
- New projectors were purchased for the Sanctuary service which greatly improved the streaming of church service segments on Facebook and improved the quality of display on the monitors.
- Beautiful new robes for the Chancel Choir, Beadles, Acolytes and Crucifers were purchased and introduced in September.
- A new embroidered table covering for the Chancel communion table was created and put into use.
- The church celebrated the completion of the renovation project at the May 20<sup>th</sup> 11 am service and offered tours of the renovated spaces to worshippers following the service.
- Eight new pencil Christmas trees were purchased and unveiled as part of the hanging of the greens prior to the Advent season. Thanks to Colleen Vermillion for her work in shopping for the trees.
- The training book for worship volunteers was updated and new volunteers were trained on October 28<sup>th</sup>.
- Guest Preachers for the 11:00 am service included David Esterline, Dean of the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, and Rev. Jimmy Hawkins of the PC(USA) Office of Public Witness in Washington, D.C.

#### Music and the Arts

- Please see Dr. Edward Moore's Music Ministry report for highlights of ELPC's music ministry in 2018.
- A tapestry mural created by ELPC members Stefani Danes and Doug Cooper was installed in the hallway off the Highland entrance. The mural depicts scenes from ELPC and the East Liberty neighborhood.



## ELPC Music Ministry

### Dr. Edward Alan Moore – Organist/Music Director

#### Journey Music Director

Following the death of Gabriel D'Abruzzo, the search began for a new music director for the Journey worship service. Michael Warren was hired and began leading the Journey Praise Team and playing for the service in September.

#### Worship Highlights

Our resident brass ensemble, *The Brass Roots*, joined us for worship six times throughout 2018: February 11, April 1 (Easter), May 13, September 9 (Rally Day), November 18, and the Christmas Eve 11:00 PM service. Pastor Randy was joined by guest musicians for Bach's *Brandenburg Concerto 5* on January 21. Mike Tomaro and his jazz combo were our guests in worship on May 20. The *Renaissance City Choirs* joined the Chancel Choir for Full Inclusion Sunday on October 14. Palmer Shonk was our guest bagpiper for *Reformation Sunday* on October 28.

#### New Robes and Handbell Covers

The Chancel Choir, Acolytes, and Beadles wore their new robes for the first time on September 9. New custom coverings for the handbell choir tables were used for the first time on December 16.

#### Cathedral Concerts

The second half of the 7<sup>th</sup> season of *Cathedral Concerts* included: Hope Academy Teaching Artists in concert on March 4, the Chancel Choir Section Leaders in *The Art of Song* on April 8, and the Brass Roots and Dr. Ed Moore in *Back to the Movies* on May 25.

The first half of the 8<sup>th</sup> season featured: organist Nathan Laube in Concert on October 7 and *Christmas in East Liberty* on December 14. Mike Tomaro was our special guest artist and composer, joining the Chancel Choir in his new arrangement of *I Wonder as I Wander*, commissioned in memory of Gabriel D'Abruzzo.



Michael Warren,  
Music Director for Journey Worship



In Memory of  
Gabe D'Abruzzo



## **Hope Academy of Music and the Arts**

Linda Addlespurger, Program Director

Craig Cannon, Interim Executive Director

East Liberty Presbyterian Church founded Hope Academy in 1999 as both a mission and a ministry. It is a beacon of hope for children who might not otherwise have the opportunity to be introduced to and participate in music and the performing arts. Through such participation children grow in self-awareness and self-esteem as they explore their God-given gifts of creativity and discover their hidden gifts and talents. As they develop skills in working together with others from all walks of life on a common artistic goal, children and youth are helped to develop attitudes of acceptance, a concern for social justice and peacemaking, and a capacity for using their voices to speak out against oppression.

Hope Academy remains committed to its goal of creating a diverse and inclusive artistic community that provides deep arts instruction through a sequential and progressive program; supporting the personal and artistic growth of students and teaching artists, alike; and contributing to our communities' positive growth and cultural vibrancy. Since its inception, Hope Academy has grown both in the number of students served, as well as in the depth and quality of programs offered. Hope Academy, the largest outreach program of the church, serving 396 students in 2018, it has consistently met its goal of providing affordable, high quality, fine arts education to a diverse student population, including underserved and minority children and youth. By deliberately recruiting a diverse teaching staff, especially artists of color, Hope Academy helps to increase the expectations of success in the arts for low-income and minority children.

The work of Hope Academy also enhances ELPC's commitment to community mission, community development, and justice and peacemaking ministries; reinforcing ELPC's core identities and image as a church that cares about children. Because Hope Academy is based in a church that has consistently cared about children and youth, students and their families know that they are in a safe place to engage in productive play and live out the values consistent with our faith. Hope Academy offers a different way of doing community development through an emphasis on developing people. When children and youth are involved in constructive activities, they are less prone to involvement in dangerous and self-destructive behavior; making this a safer community in which to live, work, shop and spend recreational time.

While most of Hope Academy's program costs are covered by tuition and substantial grants from foundations, such as The Heinz Endowments, The Grable Foundation, Remake Learning and PNC Charitable Trust we also depend on individual donors – many who come from ELPC and others through The Pittsburgh Foundation. To all of the individual donors we extend a special thank you for your commitment to making the arts affordable and accessible – and not a matter of privilege.

Hope Academy would not exist without the operational, facilities and logistical support provided by East Liberty Presbyterian Church – including class and office space, security, maintenance, utilities, insurance, bookkeeping... the list goes on. The new dance studio, part of ELPC's building renovation, is allowing us to expand and deepen our dance program offerings and strengthen our partnership with Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre.

As Hope Academy approaches its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, in 2019, we've begun a process to identify those areas where we can have the greatest impact and to determine the best ways to increase our capacity. To those ends, an interim executive director, Craig Cannon, was hired on a part-time basis, to handle grant writing, development and strategic planning.

On behalf of our staff, teaching artists, students and their families, we are proud to present what our work together has achieved in 2018.

## **PROGRAM**

- Hope Academy offered a combination of free and low-cost performing arts and music courses for children and youth from 0 to 19 years old. Classes were held after school during the week, and on Saturdays.
- Dance and theater courses included: Acting, Singing, Shakespeare Workshop, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre dance classes (Creative Movement, Pre-Ballet A & B, Ballet 2; and Bridge Ballet), Tap and West African Dance and Drumming. 211 students took a dance or theater class in 2018.
- Music program offerings included private lessons for violin, viola, cello, piano, bass, clarinet, flute, trumpet, tuba, saxophone, classical and electric guitar, ukulele, voice, drum set and percussion; Suzuki violin, cello, piano and guitar; Saxophone and Clarinet Ensemble, Flute Choir; Music Discovery; Pre-Twinkle Suzuki and Suzuki Early Childhood Education Baby and Toddler Music Class. 202 students took a music class, private lesson or participated in an ensemble in 2018.
- As of fall 2018, dance and theater course tuition rates averaged \$4.00 per class hour; and private lessons at \$20 per half hour.

## **INTENTIONAL DIVERSITY**

- In an effort to be intentional about serving a greater number of minority and low-income students, half of Hope Academy's scholarships, tuition assistance, and available spots for classes, are reserved for students who qualify as being low income and/or who represent a racial, ethnic or cultural minority. Because we recognize that diversity and individual uniqueness brings vitality to the artistic work that we do, we recruit students from across the spectrums of race, ethnicity, culture, linguistic background, sexual orientation, gender, religion, personal style, appearance, and physical ability, as well as people of diverse opinions, perspectives, lifestyles, ideas, and thinking.
- Because "it is hard to be what you can't see," Hope Academy partnered with and supported cultural organizations that present work by artists of color so that our students have a deeper connection to their own culture, as well as the cultures of others. In 2018 our students attended Chamber Music Pittsburgh's Imani Winds concert, where they participated in a meet and greet with the artists; performed with Afro Yaqui Music Collective at City of Asylum; participated in Hip Hop Orchestra's summer camp at ELPC; and made art alongside artists/activists of color through our Art of Justice program.

## **2018 PARTNERSHIPS**

The community problem we address is the lack of opportunity for young people to participate in the arts due to limited resources in their families and cutbacks in the arts programming in school. The strength and uniqueness of our programming is derived from partnerships we have developed with some of the city's finest artists and cultural organizations.

- Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre (PBT) – teaching artist and accompanist for five ballet classes a week
- Balafon West African Dance and Drumming – one class a week for 10 – 15 year olds
- Pittsburgh Girls Choir – teaching artist for Music Discovery class for 5 – 7 year olds and Act & Sing for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders
- Chamber Music Pittsburgh – instrument lending program for violin and cello students, plus tickets for all performances
- Guardians of Sound – scholarships for students in their Hip Hop Orchestra summer camp held at East Liberty Presbyterian Church in partnership with Hope Academy
- Greater Pittsburgh Suzuki Institute – scholarships for Hope Academy Suzuki students at their summer camp and fall workshop
- Afro Yaqui Music Collective – opportunities for students to perform with them at City of Asylum and other social justice events

- Pittsburgh Cultural Trust – tickets to performances and enrichment workshops
- Renaissance City Choirs (RCC) – contribution to scholarship program
- City Theatre – tickets and workshops
- Pittsburgh Public Theater – Shakespeare monologue and scene contest
- Kelly-Strayhorn Theater – performing opportunities and tickets to performances
- Warhol Museum – performing opportunity
- Tickets for Kids – tickets to performances
- WYEP Reimagination – recording and performance opportunities
- Saturday Light Brigade – on air performance opportunities
- PRYSE - Pittsburgh Refugee Youth Summer Enrichment works with us to identify young people who would benefit from our program, and then facilitates communication with families and provides transportation

## **PERFORMANCE AND EVENTS HIGHLIGHTS**

Besides open classes and recitals at East Liberty Presbyterian Church, public performances by Hope Academy students included

- Kelly Strayhorn Theater’s MLK Celebration
- “Youth Invasion,” presented by the Andy Warhol Museum
- Performed on the main stage of Light Up Night with the band A Great Big World
- HAT Co (Hope Academy’s teen Theater Company) performance of “Ever After,” their musical interpretation of the Into the Woods story, at ELPC
- HAT Co band, The Levellers, winners of WYEP’s Reimagination contest, recording of their original song, “Tell Me Why”
- Pittsburgh Public Theater Shakespeare Contest - Over 1,300 students from 80 different schools competed in Pittsburgh Public Theater’s 2018 Shakespeare Monologue and Scene Contest. Of the 32 Hope Academy students who competed, Saniya Mason was selected as a finalist. Twelve students received honorable mentions (representing the top ten percent of all participants) Kira Mukogosi, Maya Burley, Zaida Collins, Madeleine Mocker, Saniya Mason, Lili Levkulich, Quinn Seif, Daniel Piscitelli-Cruz, Chloe Baker, Marichka Zaikina, Esai Aliquo-Varela and Sophia Sellner.
- Two of the six students who were awarded full scholarships to attend Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre school, based on a community audition, were from Hope Academy.
- Twelve acceptances (in one or both of the artistic areas they applied for) into Pittsburgh CAPA 6-12 of the 12 students who received individual coaching and support from Hope Academy staff.

## **SOCIAL JUSTICE ARTS ACTIVISM**

In response to the political climate, and the expressed desire from our students and their families to be actively engaged in making a change, Hope Academy participated in a number of social justice events as organizers, participants and performers in 2018. A highlight of the year of action was organizing a group to attend the March for Our Lives in Washington, DC where 200 youth organizers, students, and chaperones from across the Pittsburgh region traveled to join the national March for Our Lives day of action to end gun violence. We stood in solidarity with survivors of the Parkland Florida shooting and demanded that our lawmakers make gun reform a top priority to end this cycle of gun violence in our schools and our communities at large.

Hope Academy partnered with One Pennsylvania and traveled together with a total of 4 buses of people from Pittsburgh. Hope Academy's Teen Theatre Company was charged with writing original chants and songs that were taught on the buses and sung by the Pittsburgh group during the march. Nearly 200 people attended a kickoff event, hosted by Hope Academy at East Liberty Presbyterian Church. Polo Sandoval and Sarah Jorgensen from CNN came to meet our students on the Friday night before we left, and then rode the bus to document the trip the next day. Hope Academy secured funding from The Sherman Evans Fund at The Pittsburgh Foundation to rent a bus and pay for the kickoff event.

Hope Academy received a grant from Remake Learning's The Great Remake for its Art of Justice project. Three artists, Alisha Wormsley, Max Gonzales and Darrell Kinsel worked with us on art-making projects connected to literature, based on social justice themes. This allowed young people and their grown ups to learn how artists are using art for social change and how their literary inspirations have guided their creative practice. The Art of Justice series was curated by Bekezela Mguni, of the Black Unicorn Library and Archives Project.

