March 26, 2020

Dear ELPC Members and Friends,

Due to the unexpected COVID-19 coronavirus outbreak and timing for the production of our monthly Reaching Out newsletter, many of the events listed in the April issue will be held via different means, rescheduled, or canceled.

For the most up-to-date information on church worship services, events, and news, please visit our website at ELPC.church and consider following us on Facebook.

Thank you for understanding during these uncharted times, and God bless.

Randy Bush
Sunday Services
Journey Worship | 8:45 am
Theme: Holding On
April 5  Rev. Dr. Randy Bush
April 12 Rev. Heather Schoenewolf
April 19 Rev. Dr. Randy Bush
April 26 Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy

Sanctuary Worship | 11 am
Livestream available on YouTube and Facebook, visit tiny.cc/elpc-stream
April 5  Rev. Dr. Randy Bush
April 12 Rev. Dr. Randy Bush
April 19 Rev. Dr. Randy Bush
April 26 Rev. Dr. Randy Bush

Labyrinth Prayer Walk
Mondays | 9 am–1 pm
Wednesdays | 9 am–9 pm

Taizé Prayer Service
Wednesdays | 7 pm
Livestream available at ELPC.church
Rev. Mary Lynn Callahan

Holy Week and Easter Worship Services
During Holy Week, join us for our special worship services as we complete our Lenten journey together by recalling the darkness and light of this church season.

Wed., April 8: Stations of the Cross Taizé
• 7 pm | Led by the Rev. Mary Lynn Callahan

Thurs., April 9: Maundy Thursday
• 7 pm | Led by the Rev. Heather Schoenewolf

Fri., April 10: Good Friday
• 12 pm | Led by the Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy
• 7 pm | Led by the Rev. Dr. Randy Bush

Sat., April 11: Easter Vigil
• 7 pm | Led by the Rev. Mary Lynn Callahan and the Rev. Dr. Randy Bush

Sun., April 12: Easter Sunday
• 8:45 am | Led by the Rev. Heather Schoenewolf
• 11 am | Led by the Rev. Dr. Randy Bush

Officer Ordination and Installation
A new class of Elders and Deacons will be ordained and installed at ELPC during Sanctuary worship on Sun., April 26. We are grateful for the gifts they bring and their willingness to serve Christ through the ordained ministries of our congregation. Join us for this special celebration of our shared ministry together.

Deacons | George Clark, Carla Coles, Elaine Phillips, Jim Russ, Linda Sanders, and Sharla Yates
Youth Deacon | Charlotte Brake-Hoffman
Elders | Bill Buchanan, David Carl, Lynne Chadwick, Kathy Glass-House, Jan Irvin, Heather Lawrence, Tom Morton, and Laura Ristau
Youth Elder | Sonia Degenholtz
Nominating Committee | Jo Ellen Aleshire, Karen Beasley, Yodit Betru, John Buckley, and Tim Engelhardt

Stations of the Cross
As we observe Holy Week, join us for a special Stations of the Cross Taizé service on Wed., April 8, 7 pm.

During this moving service, worshippers will be invited to walk through the final hours in the life of Jesus, as we walk from the Chapel to the Garth, Narthex, Sanctuary, Trinity Chapel, and back to the Chapel. This touching reflection on our own brokenness is an embodied prayer service, which will include readings, Taizé songs, silence, and ritual.
Pastoral Message
The Rev. Dr. Randall K. Bush, Pastor

In a few short days, we will move from the shadows of Lent to the bright light of Easter. The language of the suffering Servant will give way to the proclamation of the risen Savior. News about the empty tomb will be read from lecterns and announced from pulpits—and once more the language of resurrection will be given to us as part of the words intended to guide our lives and shape our conversations.

What always strikes me about the Easter story is how such an awe-inspiring, miraculous event as Christ’s resurrection invariably comes down to individual conversations and off-the-beaten-path moments of revelation. Think about it. According to the gospels, no one officially witnessed the actual resurrection of Jesus. The first people to learn about it where the women who gathered at the tomb in the murky light of that Sunday dawn—and the news was shared with them as individuals alone in that ancient cemetery setting. The next people to learn about Jesus’ resurrection heard about it from the first person accounts shared by these women-disciples. There was no angelic choir to get everyone’s attention (à la Christmas). There was no natural wonder, like a parted Red Sea (à la Moses), to divinely verify this Easter miracle. There were only the words shared by these witnesses—stuttering, surprised, hard-to-believe-it-for-themselves stories told individually to anyone who might listen. “Jesus is alive. Trust me on this.”

Beth and I have just returned from our sabbatical time spent mostly in Barcelona, Spain. There are so many memories and stories we could share about our time overseas—the places we saw, the people we met, the family and friends we hosted over the past ten weeks. There are “big picture,” impressive things we could talk about with you, such as the amazing “La Sagrada Familia” cathedral in Barcelona or the majestic “Alhambra” complex in Granada. But what lingers are the encounters we had one-on-one with locals, ex-patriates, and tourists we met along the way. This happened in restaurants with chatty waiters, with friendly souls offering us directions when we were lost, and with people of faith at the English-speaking Anglican church we found just north of the city. It happened while listening to audio guides while visiting enormous medieval cathedrals or standing on the same steps Columbus walked up to share with Isabella and Ferdinand his (troubling) news about his first voyage westward. We gained a fresh appreciation for the powerful sweep of human history and how, in so many ways and over so many centuries, people are struggling to articulate a common story about how to walk the journey of life together—whether from Español or los Estados Unidos—as children of God and siblings in the church universal.

God’s plan for Easter involves much the same dynamic. The resurrection of Christ is intended to be something that is shared person by person, moment by moment. It is not a flashy, “fireworks in the sky, bolt of lightning from heaven” type of miracle. It is the gift of life-affirming hope that is first accepted in one’s heart and then shared with others, one by one. As Easter people, God wants us to carry this resurrection story out into the world. By our actions and prayers, our simple deeds of kindness and our prophetic, courageous efforts on behalf of justice, we show forth the power inherent in Christ’s victory over death. Like women rushing from the cemetery, unsure how to put what they just saw into words, we spend our lives doing this exact same thing—finding ways to share with others that death has no ultimate power and that, yes, our Savior truly lives.

He has risen! Christ is risen indeed!

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

Sun., April 5: One Great Hour of Sharing Offering
On Palm Sunday, April 5, we will witness to God’s abundant love and receive the One Great Hour of Sharing offering. This important offering makes a difference in the lives of people all over the world by relieving hunger through the Presbyterian Hunger Program, promoting development through the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People, and assisting in areas of disaster through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. Learn more at tiny.cc/oghs.

Sun., April 26: Earth Day @ 50 Commemoration
The global theme of Earth Day’s 50th anniversary is Climate Action. More than a day, Earth Day 2020 (Wed., April 22) is called to be an historic movement as citizens of the world rise up in a united way for the creativity, innovation, ambition, and bravery we need to meet our climate crisis and seize the enormous opportunities of a zero-carbon future.

ELPC will commemorate Earth Day during our worship services on Sun., April 26. Join us as we recognize this special anniversary, celebrate ELPC’s movement towards environmental stewardship, and acknowledge the “fierce urgency” of the climate crisis.

The Environmental Team of the Justice Committee also will launch the ELPC tree planting initiative. See the article below and keep a look out for more information.

Trees, Our Magic Machines
A recent headline reads, “Want to fight global warming? Plant trees.” You may have read about research studies that show that expanding forests with native trees could reverse the effects of our toxic carbon emissions. Global tree restoration has been called “our most effective climate change solution to date.” But even better news is that, according to well-known tree scientist Diana Beresford-Kroeger, if everyone on earth plants one tree a year for six years, we could restore a sustainable carbon balance on the planet.

Trees have been called “magic machines” because they consume carbon dioxide—which makes up most of our greenhouse gases—and produce oxygen. They also clean the air and cool it on hot days, build healthy soil, increase biodiversity, aid pollinators, help prevent water pollution, and improve property values. And compared to other carbon-capturing strategies, planting trees is a lot less expensive.

The Environmental Team of the Justice Committee is planning ways that we can do our part. By teaming up with Tree Pittsburgh and reaching out to other churches in our community, we are making tree-planting a high priority this year. More information will be available soon, as our plans start to sprout!

Confirmands Continue their Faith Journeys
Confirmands and their sponsors will gather together in the Second Floor Parlor following Sanctuary worship on Sun., April 5 & 26, for lunch and an opportunity to hear each student’s Statement of Faith.

Spring Cleaning Tips
During “spring cleaning” season, the Environmental Team of the Justice Committee suggests using eco-friendly household cleaning products. As you may know, many of the common household cleaners and detergents are not only toxic and harmful to humans and animals, but they also are harmful to our environment. Here are some helpful tips.

Avoid: Bleach-Based Powders
Many cleaning powders, like Comet, contain chloroform, formaldehyde, benzene, and other toxic ingredients.

Use: Baking Soda
However, do not add vinegar or lemons to baking soda. The bubbling reaction you see when the ingredients are combined is the acid neutralizing the power of the baking soda.

Avoid: Furniture Polish
Products like Pledge contain nitrobenzene, which is toxic and easily absorbed through the skin.

Use: A Simple Solution
In a glass spray bottle, combine 1 cup water, 1/2 cup distilled vinegar, 2 tbsp olive or coconut oil, 10 drops lemon essential oil, and 5 drops cedarwood essential oil.
No Church School on Easter Sunday
There will be no Church School classes on Easter Sunday, April 12. Classes will resume on Sun., April 19.

Children & 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

Contemporaries  McKelvy Room
Facilitator: Carolyn Russ, Steering Committee Chair
April 5: The Church’s Role in Anti-Semitism
Holy Week is traditionally the most dangerous time of the year for Jews. The Rev. Liddy Barlow, executive minister of Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania, will help us understand how the Christian church is implicated in the centuries of terrorizing of Jews around the world.

April 19: Living in Liberty  Part 2
Sherrill Rudy of Living in Liberty will return to talk more about human trafficking. We will look at survivor stories and red flags, as well as scenarios we might encounter and ways of dealing with them.

April 26: Church, an Imperfect Family
Diana Armstrong will lead us in a discussion of church as family, with all the love—and aggravation—that it involves.

Journey with Scripture  Highland Room
Facilitators: Lora Bethea and Jan Lyle Irvin
“Set me as a seal upon your heart...for love is strong as death, passionate as the grave.”—Song of Solomon 8:6
Love, strong and passionate, is displayed throughout April’s “Year D” readings. Esther, the Jewish queen of the Persian king Ahasuerus, risks her life to save the Jewish people. Zechariah envisions a political ruler, triumphant but humble, bringing peace to the nations. In love, Christ courageously embraces that vision on the way to the cross. The apostle Peter summons followers to maintain constant love for one another through the end of all things. Join us to ponder and be embraced by God’s courageous love for just such as a time as now.

April 5: Zechariah 9:9–17; Psalm 106:40–48; 1 Corinthians 10:12–11:1; John 12:12–19
April 19: Esther 4:1–17; Psalm 89:46–52; 1 Peter 4:7–11; John 15:17–27

Parenting Circle  Harambe Room
Facilitators: Parenting Circle Leadership Team
April: Prayer
Anyone involved in parenting (singles, couples, adoptive parents, step-parents, grandparents, guardians, mentors, etc.) is welcome to join our group! We share experiences, resources, prayer, and scripture as we explore how our faith builds and nourishes our family lives, as well as nurtures our parent/child relationships. Join us as we learn from one another ways to foster closer family relationships in the context of creating active faith communities.
**Christian Education**

*Continued from previous page*

**Seekers**  Garth Overlook Room

*Facilitator: Gwen Puza*

**April 5: I Get Crucifixion, but Resurrection?**
How well can we truly understand Jesus’ resurrection? Was it truly physical? Was it something else? What does it mean for Christ’s presence in our life today. And how we experience Christ in the world? The Rev. Dr. Graham Standish will be with us to explore these questions with insight found in the Bible.

Rev. Dr. Standish is executive director of Samaritan Counseling, Guidance, and Consulting. He also is a spiritual director and an adjunct professor at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

**April 19 & 26: Christian Political Ethics**
Dr. Ron Stone, ELPC Elder, will be with us for four weeks (April 19 and 26, May 31, and June 7) to reflect on insights from his book, *The Ultimate Imperative*, which includes the themes of his writings for policy of the PC(USA) from 1975–2005.

Dr. Stone taught Social Ethics at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and the University of Pittsburgh from 1969–2005.

**April 19: Introduction to Christian Political Ethics**
We will explore major themes of Christian ethics and their implications for political ethics and action in the U.S. Perspectives on love, justice, commandments, and moral principles as they relate to modern politics lay the foundations for our discussion and for a life-long commitment to the relevance of Christian faith to action.

**April 26: Thou Shall Not Bear False Witness**
The American Republic has been shaken by the “false witness” of many of its political leaders. False witness is a biblical theme as well as the subject of one of the Ten Commandments. Dr. Stone has addressed the CIA and the National Security Issue on this issue, and his essays on the presidency of Mr. Trump. These major themes are presented in his book *The Ultimate Imperative*.

**Soul Food**  Good Samaritan Room

*Facilitators: Rev. Joe Hajdu and other class members*

**April 5: Spiritual Pathways**
We will conclude our discussion of various ways and styles of praying using the Spiritual Pathways program.

**April 19 & 26: Gratefulness, the Heart of Prayer**
We will discuss material from *Gratefulness, the Heart of Prayer*, by Brother David Steindl-Rast.

**Children & Youth Ministry**

*Sara Hackett, Coordinator of Christian Ed. & Youth Ministry*

To RSVP for an event or to ask questions, please contact Sara Hackett at SaraH@coh.net or 412.441.3800 x120.

**Sun., April 19: DG2!**  12-2:30 pm
Youth in grades 4–12 are invited to gather with our friends from Rodef Shalom to celebrate our year of service together. Check the bulletin, news flash, and website for more details.

**Sun.–Sat., July 26–Aug. 1: Trinity Youth Conference**
TYC is a regional Presbyterian leadership conference for youth who have completed grade 9 and up, as well as college-age students, at Living Waters Camp in Shellsburg, Pennsylvania. The week is full of faith formation, intentional Christian community, play, worship, and thoughtfulness. Visit TrinityYouthConference.org for more information.

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**Summer Mission Trips**
Visit ELPC.church or talk to Sara Hackett and learn more about our summer Mission Trips. Permission slips, trip requirements and additional trip details can be found online and at the church.

**Middle School**  July 12–17
Youth in grades 6–8 are invited to join us for a week of mission projects in the Slippery Rock area, as well as fun camp games and meaningful worship, while we stay at Crestfield Camp for Mission Possible.

**High School**  Aug. 9–15
Youth in grades 9–12 will be traveling to Asheville, North Carolina, to serve with Ashevile Youth Mission. We will work on a variety of service projects, and explore how God is at work in their community and in our lives.

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**club one sixteen**  Wednesdays, 3:30–7:30 pm

*Note: We will not meet during Holy Week on Wed., April 8. Our regular schedule will resume on Wed., April 15.*

**club one sixteen** is our mid-week program for children and youth in grades 1–12. Our schedule is as follows:

- **3:30 pm:** Gathering Time/ Homework Help/Open Gym
- **4:30 pm:** Opening Worship
- **5 pm:** Dinner
- **5:30 pm:**
  - Older Youth: Bible Study & Gym
  - Younger Youth: Bible Study, Crafts, & Gym
- **7:30 pm:** Dismissal
**Presbyterian Women**

**Bible Study | Love Carved in Stone**

**Mon., April 6  7 pm | Tues., April 7  10:15 am**

Join us for our Bible study, titled *Love Carved in Stone: A Fresh Look at the 10 Commandments*. This month’s session is *Words of Love: Speak Truthfully*. “The wound at the heart of this Word is the betrayal and erosion of personal and institutional trust.”

Monday’s group will be facilitated by Heather Lawrence in the Trustees Room. Kay Shissler will lead Tuesday’s group, which meets in the Second Floor Parlor and concludes with a lunch featuring soup and sides provided by members. We look forward to seeing you!

**PW Spring Retreat | Fri.–Sat., April 17–18**

Presbyterian Women invite all women to an overnight retreat at Crestfield Camp. We will gather for dinner on Friday and conclude on Saturday at 5 pm. Our theme is *Fragrant Wisdom*. Laura Ristau will guide our exploration of wisdom and fragrance and ways they intersect our faith. There will be time to share and create deeper connections and understanding. Pick up a brochure or download one at [tiny.cc/pw-retreat](http://tiny.cc/pw-retreat). Be sure to register by Fri., April 10.

**Spiritual Life**

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

**Sun., April 5: Heretics, Doubters, and Other Saints  12–3 pm**

What do/don’t we think/believe about Easter? Join us in the Second Floor Parlor following Sanctuary worship for an open conversation where all ideas and questions are welcome! Lunch will be provided.

**Fri. & Sat., April 24 & 25: Embodying the Gifts of the Nine Essential Qualities of the Divine and the Enneagram Types**

One of the most powerful aspects of the Enneagram is its brilliance in showing us that God has nine essential attributes or expressions and that we can be open to all nine and move from a life that is limited by fear and perception to a life of embodied wisdom, love, and presence in every action.

Jessica Dibb will lead us as we learn about and experience the full dimensionality of our authentic, liberated self and the full spectrum of the Divine somatically, emotionally, and cognitively using the brilliant precise map of the Enneagram. We will gather on Fri., April 24, 6–9 pm, and Sat., April 25, 9 am–6 pm.

Registration materials are available online.
LGBTQ Ministry
Wil Forrest, Coordinator of LGBTQ Ministry

Sun., April 19: Attend Our Next Spiritual Gathering 12:30 pm
All are invited to our LGBTQ Ministry’s next spiritual gathering to share lunch and fellowship. Allies and LGBTQIA+ folks alike are welcome.

Contact Wil Forrest at Wil@coh.net or 412.441.3800 x118 for more details.

God created you.
God loves you.
Be yourself.

Hope Academy Students Flourish at Shakespeare Contest

In February, 40 Hope Academy students competed against 1,066 talented, young performers from 110 local schools in Pittsburgh Public Theater’s 26th annual Shakespeare Monologue and Scene Contest.

We’re blessed to announce that Hope Academy’s Chloe Baker earned first place for her upper division monologue of the Jailer’s Daughter from The Two Noble Kinsmen, and duo Marco Petrucci and Zora Rose tied for first place with their lower division scene from Romeo and Juliet. Angelo Collins also was a lower division monologue finalist.

In addition, nine Hope Academy students were recognized as honorable mentions: Zaida Collins and Saniya Mason, Shayla Esquivel, Bella Gonzales, Burke Keener, Luca Leisher, Madeleine Mocker, Lucia Pelling, and Quinn Seif.

“We are happy to have so many students selected as finalists and honorable mentions,” said Linda Addlespurger, director of Hope Academy. “But the best part of this experience is that every single one of our students did so well and learned so much in the process.”

We also are pleased to announce that Linda Addlespurger received the 2020 Rob Zellers Award for Excellence in Arts Education.

Need a Space to Park?
For parking options and details, please visit tiny.cc/elpc-parking.

Also, due to changes made in the use of our staff parking lot off of Baum Blvd., we ask that visitors do not park there. We are seeking to use this lot to its best potential and unplanned parkers in this area prohibit us from using the space.

Thank you!

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

Our Blessings
- Kathleen and Ryan Croyle welcomed their daughter, Marian Clarissa Croyle, who was born on Feb. 14.
- Congratulations to Kara Kinne and Matthew Roth who recently celebrated their baptisms.

Our Prayers
We offer our prayers and condolences to the family and friends of those who recently passed away:
- Molly Dimond-Stephany’s sister-in-law, Andrea Todd Farwell’s father, Everett Marvin Farwell
- Mark Thomas’ mother
- Dee Flaherty’s father, Gordon Griffin
- Matt Stuft’s mother, Linda Stuft
- Rev. Heather Schoenewolf’s uncle, Jim

Memorial Service for Jane Sampson
On Sun., April 26, ELPC will host a Memorial Service to celebrate the life of long-time member Jane Sampson.
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.”

ELPC Building Closure
- Mon., April 13 | Easter
- Sun., May 3 | Pittsburgh Marathon

Holy Week Labyrinth Hours
During Holy Week, the Labyrinth will be available Monday–Friday, 9 am–9 pm, and Saturday, 9 am–1 pm. Experience this ancient tool for individual walking meditation and prayer.

Register Today for VCS
Vacation Church School will take place Mon.–Fri., June 22–26, 9 am–3 pm. Guided by our theme, Focus: See What Matters Most, children ages 4–grade 5 will discover how to trust in what they CAN’T see because of what they CAN see. Together, our days will be filled with fun, laughter, and a lot of God’s Word.

We also are looking for youth and adult volunteers to serve in a variety of roles to help make VCS a success! Sign up if you can help the whole week or just a few hours.

Registration forms for students and volunteers are available in church, or folks may fill out an electronic registration form online. Learn more at tiny.cc/vcs.

Movies, Movies, Movies!
The ninth season of ELPC’s Cathedral Concerts series concludes on Fri., May 22, 7:30 pm, with a thrilling performance by The Brass Roots and organist Dr. Edward Alan Moore in the Sanctuary. They will team up with guest conductor, arranger, and Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra trombonist James Nova to deliver a sonic spectacular, themed “Movies, Movies, Movies!”

The exciting program will feature iconic themes from Batman and Beetlejuice by legendary composer and four-time Oscar nominee Danny Elfman. The audience will experience these well-known melodies like they’ve never been heard before.

The concert is free, but a freewill offering will be received.