



Pentecost Offering

God's vision for the world is that everyone find a place within God's kingdom. At Pentecost, we celebrate the pouring out of the Holy Spirit by God, so that people of every identity and language can hear a word of welcome into the kingdom of God. We all belong to God, and so it is only righteous and just for us to live together, learn together, and celebrate together in peace—despite our differences.

As Presbyterians, at Pentecost, we look especially to the children, youth, and young adults with whom God has called us to live. The psalmist reminds us of the importance of faith being established during our earliest years, saying, "God from my youth you have taught me, and I still proclaim your

wondrous deeds." Our youngest church members—and our community—need help to build their full potential in both faith and life—and all of us have a role to play. When we pay attention, we may find that children and youth teach us more than we realize about faith in Jesus Christ and how the Holy Spirit is moving in our world.

During this Pentecost season, the ELPC Mission Board encourages us to celebrate the fact that we are building a life of faith and building the community of God inside and outside our church's walls by supporting children, youth, and young adults.

ELPC will receive the Pentecost Offering on **Pentecost Sunday, May 23**. You may give by mailing your donation to the church, submitting a designated gift through electronic bank transfer, or using the donate button at **ELPC.church**. Please give generously, as you are able.

Summer Worship Schedule

We will transition to our summer worship schedule on **Sun., June 13**, with one Sunday service at 10 am. This early service will continue through Labor Day weekend, and will feature monthly communion and lively music.

We hope that you will make worshiping with our faith family a consistent part of your summer routine!

Livestream Services

Our services are being livestreamed on YouTube, Facebook, and Zoom. For more details, visit **ELPC.church**.

Sunday Services

*Celebration of the Lord's Supper

Journey Worship | 8:45 am

Theme: Re-emerge

May 2* Rev. Heather Schoenewolf

May 9 Rev. Dr. Randy Bush

May 16 Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy

May 23 Rev. BJ Woodworth

May 30 Rev. Heather Schoenewolf

Sanctuary Worship | 11 am

May 2* Rev. Dr. Randy Bush

May 9 Rev. Dr. Randy Bush

May 16 Rev. Dr. Randy Bush

May 23 Rev. BJ Woodworth

May 30 Rev. Heather Schoenewolf

Taizé Prayer Service

Wednesdays | 7 pm Rev. BJ Woodworth

Celebrating the 50th Day

Pentecost comes from a Greek word meaning, "fiftieth day." This holiday falls on the fiftieth day after Easter. It celebrates when the Holy Spirit came with wind and flame, empowering the disciples to proclaim the good news of the risen Lord to all people. Pentecost is about a "new creation"—trusting that by God's grace, all things are transformed and made new.

Join us in worship on **Pentecost Sunday, May 23**, as we celebrate this annual event of spirit-led praise and proclamation!



East Liberty Presbyterian Church

info@coh.net | 412.441.3800

Staff Leadership

The Rev. Dr. Randall K. Bush

Pastor

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The Rev. Heather Schoenewolf
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Venetia Singletary VenetiaS@coh.net | x116

Pastoral Message

The Rev. Dr. Randall K. Bush, Pastor



The first Sunday of every month, we celebrate the sacrament of communion. It is a powerful ritual and one that communicates on many levels. I remember being a young boy in my small-town Kansas, Presbyterian church, seated in the pews as they would pass the trays of bread down the aisles followed by the small plastic cups holding grape juice. The minister would say "drink of this, all of you" and I remember being impressed as everyone drank the juice together (followed by the sound of the cups clicking into place in the small

cupholders built into the pews). The solidarity of this common act left a strong impression on me.

Sometimes I think we focus on the wrong things in the communion sacrament. Historically, a lot of strong words have been spoken and doctrinal battles fought over the nature of the bread and wine served at communion. Is it the literal body and blood of Christ? Are these elements transformed by the minister's words or does a spiritual change happen to the bread and juice? Our Catholic friends have placed great emphasis on the transubstantiation of the elements, which I sadly believe is one of several misguided doctrines they have taught over the years. (A couple others include their flawed belief that only men can be priests and their illogical opposition to contraception.) Jesus spoke of himself as the vine, the shepherd, and the living water, but that did not imply something changes with vines, shepherds, or water if we would bring them inside a church. In the same way, the bread and cup are means by which Christ's message of redeeming love is physically shared with us—metaphorical elements overlaid with powerful spiritual meaning in the communion meal.

One theologian I read years ago argued that when Jesus said, "This is my body given for you," the demonstrative pronoun "this" does not necessarily refer to the bread. The word "this" could refer to the act of communing together, of blessing, breaking, and sharing bread generously with those at the table. I like the concept that the celebration of communion involves lifting up common elements of bread and juice, seeing them as embodiments of Christ's common humanity with us, as well as sharing these elements with others beside us—an act of hospitality and grace of which it can be said, "This is what it means to be the body of Christ." This double interpretation of communion helps us move beyond a fixation on the elements and see how communion is a far-reaching sacrament. It involves gathering at the table, praying together over the elements, re-telling the story of Christ's loving sacrifice and resurrection power, sharing a brief meal together AND then going out into the world, giving, praying, sharing, and breaking bread with others. In all of that, Christ is present and made known in the world.

The month of May brings together both Easter season and Pentecost—the good news of Christ's death-defeating love for us and the inspiring witness of the church's birth through the power of the Holy Spirit. Communion includes both those ideas as well. May we do "this"—share the communion elements and share all we have with those in need around us—in remembrance of Christ. For such is his command to us today.

Randy Bush

Mission Matters

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

Sat., May 8: A Conversation on Solitary Confinement and No-Knock Warrants The Justice Committee will host a conversation on Solitary Confinement and No-Knock Warrants (Breonna's Law). In January and February, we held petition signing events to get these two issues on the Primary Election Ballot for May 18. That effort was very successful and we would like to follow that up with an opportunity to review and discuss the data behind these two issues and how we can be informed voters.

Please join members of the Justice Committee and special guests to talk about these two initiatives in depth on **Sat.**, **May 8**, 7 pm. Attend the meeting via Zoom at **tiny.cc/ballot-conversation**. Or you may call **929.205.6099**. Enter meeting ID **873 4623 6178** and passcode **621699** when prompted.

You must be a registered voter in Pittsburgh to vote for "Breonna's Law." You must be a registered voter in Allegheny County to vote for the solitary confinement initiative. If you live outside of Allegheny County, we still welcome your participation in this important discussion.

Sun., May 30: Why Do We Have To Keep Talking About Race Anyway?

"White people often say 'I am colorblind,' 'I don't see race,' and 'There is just the human race.' They think people of color are obsessed with race and that alleging discrimination is itself racist, divisive, and playing the race card. They think that racism towards people of color no longer exists.

So, let's examine evidence of historical and current

So, let's examine evidence of historical and current racial discrimination in American life to see if race and racism are serious problems." ("Should we stop talking about Race?" by Ralph Bangs)

If you are interested in this conversation about racial discrimination from the perspective of Dr. Beverly Harris-Schenz, join the Facing Systemic Racism Team following Sanctuary worship on **Sun.**, **May 30**, at **tiny.cc/race-talk**.

Second Great Semi-Annual ELPC Food Drive-By

Mark your calendars! Our second great semi-annual ELPC Food Drive-By will be held on **Sun., May 16**, 12–3 pm. Do your part to help decrease food insecurity in our local neighborhoods! Simply purchase items from the list below, drive through the Staff Parking Lot on Baum Blvd., and drop them off (no need to get out of the car). The food will be distributed through the EECM Food Pantry. Requested non-perishable food items include:

Pastas/Sauces Salt/Seasonings/Spices Rice

Cereals Canned and Dried Fruit Canned Vegetables
Crackers Soups/Broths Jelly/Peanut Butter

When you drop off your food contribution, be sure to pick up a packet of seeds (flower or vegetable) for your summer planting. The seeds are a gift from the Environmental Team of the Justice Committee

A Total of 1,090 Items

The ELPC Mission Board thanks everyone who donated toiletry items at our April drive-by collection in support of people housed at Allegheny County Jail. The event was a wonderful success and we were able to supply the Chaplain's Office with 21 boxes of toiletries and 3 boxes of puzzles. In total, we collected:

- 354 bars of soap
- 123 bottles of shampoo
- 28 bottles of conditioner
- 78 bottles of body wash
- 31 bottles of 3-in-1 body wash, shampoo, and conditioner
- 171 sticks of deodorant
- 101 tubes of toothpaste
- 85 bottles of lotion
- **119** puzzles

We also thank Jason Lucarelli, Carol Chonoska, Michele Bossers and Judy Mancini for volunteering their time to receive and pack the donations.





Christian Education

The Rev. Heather Schoenewolf, Associate Pastor for Educational Ministries

Note: Adult classes are held on Sundays, 9:45 am, via Zoom.

Children | Preschool-Grade 5

Our theme for May will be "Pentecost and the Holy Spirit." We will gather via Zoom on **Sun., May 23**, 10 am, so we can celebrate Pentecost together. All students are welcome whether or not you are doing Church School at home. If you haven't signed up, register your child at **ELPC.church**.

Middle School | Grades 6-8

We will meet via Zoom on **Sun., May 16**, 12:30 pm, to enjoy some fun activities and celebrate God's goodness.

High School | Grades 9-12

We will meet at ELPC on Sun., June 6, 12:30 pm.

Journey with Scripture

Facilitators: Lora Bethea and Jan Lyle Irvin

"Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city."—
Revelation 22:1–2

The Bible begins in chaos—the earth as a formless void, darkness covering the face of the deep waters. But through the Spirit of steadfast love and faithfulness, God begins to tame it. Order, diversity, and mutuality become established. This month, at Bible's end, we read that a new Heaven and Earth emerge. A new city descends from heaven. God and Christ dwell there together with its inhabitants. The chaos is gone. Death, mourning, crying, and pain are gone. The nations walk by the city's light. Leaders and people enter its gates, they're always open. Welcome home! Such a long journey to get here. Take heart Pittsburgh and ELPC. Look where the future happens and to the One who *makes all things new*.

May 2: Psalm 43; Select readings from the Book of Tobit and the Art of Rembrandt

May 9: Psalm 42; Revelation 18:1–24; 19:1–21

May 16: Psalm 82; Bel and the Dragon 1–40; Revelation 20:1–15

May 23: Psalm 83; Esther 14:1–19; Revelation 21:1–27

May 30: Psalm 52; 1 Esdras 4:13–42; Revelation 22:1–21

Parenting Circle

Facilitator: Trish Buben

May: This Life That Is Ours

We will continue discussing excerpts from Lauren Burdette's book, *This Life That Is Ours*.

Seekers

Facilitator: Gwen Puza | gpuza9@gmail.com

May 2: An American Conscience: The Reinhold Niebuhr Story

In the 20th century, Reinhold Niebuhr became our nation's moral voice during some of the most defining moments in American history. This PBS DVD includes remarks by ELPC member Dr. Ron Stone, who was Niebuhr's teaching assistant at Union Theological Seminary in the 1960s.

Dr. Stone will be with us to answer questions after the video.

May 9: The First Family of American Theology

Dr. Ron Stone will continue with any questions from the May 2 film, as well as his introduction to Reinhold's brother, Richard, and his book, *Christ and Culture*.

May 16: Themes of the Theologian's Theologian

Dr. Ron Stone will highlight the major and unique themes in H. Richard Niebuhr's teachings and discuss Richard's book, *Christ and Culture*. (Recommended reading: Chapters 1, 5, and 6.)

May 23: What can we Learn from the Dead Sea Scrolls? Beginning in the late 1940s, the Dead Sea Scrolls were found in 11 different caves near the western banks of the Dead Sea in Israel. It is hard to understate how significant this discovery has been for the study of Jewish history and for biblical studies.

What are in these documents? How have they changed our understanding of the Bible? What do they tell us about the cultural world of the New Testament?

Dr. Tucker Ferda, ELPC member and assistant professor of New Testament at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, will introduce us to these fascinating texts.

May 30: Matthew Fox will Discuss the Cosmic Christ Matthew Fox is an Episcopal priest and author of books, such as *The Coming of the Cosmic Christ, Original Blessing*, and *Creation Spirituality*, which he will discuss in this video.

Soul Food

Facilitators: Rev. Joe Hajdu and other class members

May: In My Grandmother's House

On each of the five Sundays in May, we will discuss our current book, *In My Grandmother's House: Black Women, Faith, and the Stories We Inherit,* by Yolanda Pierce. New participants are always welcome, online or by phone.

Contact the Rev. Joe Hajdu at hajdu625@comcast.net for more details or suggestions on how to obtain our book.

Children & Youth Ministry

Sara Hackett, Coordinator of Christian Ed. & Youth Ministry

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

Sun., May 23: Youth Mission Project | **Care Packages** *12:30–2 pm* Youth in grades 6–12 will meet outside ELPC to create care packages. Supplies also can be delivered to your home. Please RSVP by **Wed., May 19**, by contacting Sara or completing the online permission form.

Young Adult Ministry

Kelli Booher, Interim Coordinator of Young Adult Ministries

Contact Kelli Booher at **KelliB@coh.net** or **405.501.0711** to RSVP for an event or to ask questions. Get YAM text updates by texting "YAM" to **412.612.2594**.

Tues., May 11: YAM Summer Planning Happy Hour 6–7:30pm Grab your dinner and a drink, and let's catch up and plan for a fun YAM summer!

Sat., May 15: Spring Series | Spiritual Fermentation 6–8 pm

For centuries, beer has been a means for spiritual growth—from monks embracing the contemplative process of brewing "liquid bread" to the ways it has stimulated meaningful conversations when shared. Fermentation also provides a rich metaphor for the transformation into which the Spirit invites us. Pastor BJ will lead us as we continue exploring the connections among beer, monastic practice, and "spiritual fermentation." Each gathering will include a tasting of a particular beer style, a reflection on brewing and our spiritual lives, and a guided prayer practice.

The series is open to young adults, 18–40 years old. You must be 21+ to participate in the tasting and the cost is **\$5/person**. RSVP to Kelli by **Tues., May 11**.

Sat., May 22: YAM Outdoor Detective Adventure 10 am-2 pm CluedUpp is an exciting, outdoor detective adventure—and it's coming to Pittsburgh! "Can your team of detectives scramble across town, solve the clues and crack the case in time?" We think we can! Please RSVP to Kelli by **Mon., May 17**.

Fri.–Sat., June 11–12: Contemplative Activism Retreat with Cole Arthur Riley See details on page 6, under Spiritual Life.



YAM Camping Trip at Raccoon Creek State Park

Mark your calendars for a camping trip over the weekend of **June 26–27**. We'll head up to Raccoon Creek State Park in Beaver County. More details to come. If you are interested, please plan on attending the YAM Summer Planning Happy Hour on Tues., May 11.



Kid's Summer Programs at ELPC

At ELPC, when we use the word "Sanctuary," we are usually talking about the space in our cathedral, filled with stained glass windows, high ceilings, stone carvings, and a few well-placed church mice carved into the woodwork. It is a place where we gather to worship God.

This past year, we have been reminded that "Sanctuary" is a word that is bigger than our big church. "Sanctuary" is anywhere we find God, anywhere we experience holiness, anywhere we feel safe.

This summer, we are going to explore how we experience God within ourselves, our communities, our church, and our world. Each month this summer, we will be hosting an activity for kids and their grown ups to attend so that we might continue to worship, learn, and have fun together!

Mark your calendars for Sun., June 27, Wed., July 14, and Sun., Aug. 22!
All events will be held at ELPC or Highland Park.

Please note that masks and adherence to all COVID-19 safety protocols will be required at all of these events.

Exploring Creation Spirituality at GCF

The Spiritual Life Committee invites you to explore Creation Spirituality at Garfield Community Farm (GCF) on **Sat., May 1**, 9–11 am.

GCF's mission is to provide fresh produce and educational opportunities with our neighbors and volunteers, and seek to demonstrate God's restoration of creation through urban agriculture in the Garfield community. GCF also exists as a natural monastery that invites us into a conversation, a dance with Creation—the Earth—"the Original Cathedral."

Stephanie and Kevin Bell, **philoxenialife.com**, will lead us as we encounter the wisdom of the trees, ingest the healing powers of the herbal plants, journey within the Sensory Peace Labyrinth, and engage the inner creative spirit within us and in all creation.



What to Bring: Face mask (to be worn at all times), water bottle, sunscreen, long pants, comfortable clothes and shoes, and a lawn chair (if uncomfortable standing or sitting on benches).

Suggested Donation: \$10. All donations support GCF.

Registration: Limited to 25 people. Please register with Norma Meyer at **Norma@coh.net**.

Presbyterian Women

PW Virtual Bible Study: The End of Lament

Mon., May 3 7–8:30 pm | Tues., May 4 10 am–12 pm We conclude our study of lament where we began—with hope. Hope motivates our lament and our lament results in hope. God has promised that one day there will be no more crying, no more death, no more tears. Until God's kingdom comes, we lament as we patiently wait in hope.



For more details, email PW.ELPC@gmail.com.

Tues., May 18: Sharing Lament 12–1 pm

We will reflect on what we have learned about lament, the need to lament, and our ability to lament.

Spiritual Life

The Rev. BJ Woodworth, Director of Spiritual Life Ministries

Fri.—Sat., June 11–12: Contemplative Activism Retreat with Cole Arthur Riley
The Spiritual Life Committee is excited to bring in Cole Arthur Riley to lead a retreat
on Contemplative Activism. Join us we learn how to adopt spiritual practices that
suspend between the contemplative and pursuit of justice. In our activism, spiritual
contemplation can feel more like a precursor to the work of justice, instead of a
core part of it. Together, we will explore the gift of a contemplative spirituality that is
marked by liberating habits of storytelling, emotion, and embodiment.

Cole Arthur Riley is a writer, liturgist, and speaker who is seeking a deeply contemplative life marked by embodiment and emotion. She is the founder and writer of Black Liturgies—a project seeking to integrate concepts of dignity, lament, rage, justice, rest, and liberation with the practice of written prayer. She also serves as the content and spiritual formation manager for Chesterton House, a Christian studies center at Cornell University.



Retreat Details

The cost is **\$50** (scholarships are available). Please register by **Fri., June 4**. Like our previous online retreats, we will gather via Zoom at scheduled times. Cole will speak and guide us in prayer, a reflection, and an embodied activity during each of these sessions, as well as give suggestions and prompts for our own solitude and contemplation in between each session. Our themes will be as follows:

- Friday, 6 pm | The Liberation of the Self Exploring how insight into our interior lives can be an active justice practice, as we talk about selfhood, story, and memory.
- Saturday, 9 am | Liberating Emotion Examining how emotional truth-telling informs contemplation and activism—specifically emotions such as lament and anger.
- Saturday, 1 pm | Contemplation & The Body
 Discussing how contemplative habits can and should guide us into deeper
 connections with our bodies, including the cost of justice-work on our bodies,
 and contemplation as a healing force.
- Saturday, 5 pm | Closing Prayer Service Gathering in the graces and sharing our intentions.

Staff Spotlight | Rachelle Calfee

Have you met Rachelle Calfee, our church's bookkeeper? Rachelle started working at ELPC in February 2019 through the Robert Half Temp Agency, before joining the staff full time in May of the same year. Keep reading to learn more about her.



Working at ELPC | I enjoy knowing that our employees are paid correctly and in a timely manner, as well as that the church's bills are current. Most of all, I enjoy the working relationships I have with management and staff.

Just for Fun | I like to walk with my husband for exercise, and I coach a women's kickball team.

Favorite Song | *Here and Now* by Luther Vandross

Favorite Food | Shrimp and crab legs

Dream Vacation | Aruba

LGBTQ Ministry

Wil Forrest, Coordinator of LGBTQ Ministry

Sun., May 16: Spiritual Gathering 12:30 pm



All allies and LGBTQIA+ folks alike are invited to our next monthly Spiritual Gathering! We will share meeting time and fellowship together via Zoom.

For more details, contact Wil Forrest at Wil@coh.net or 412.441.3800 x118.

God Created You. God Loves You. Be Yourself.

Hope Academy of Music and the Arts

Linda Addlespurger, Director

Wed., May 19: Hope Academy Students to Perform at PBT's Open Air Series



Hope Academy students will be performing on Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre's mobile stage for *Open Air: A Series in Celebration of the Performing Arts* on **Wed., May 19**, 5 pm, at Flagstaff Hill in Schenley Park.

The two-week event will feature music, theater, and dance by performing artists from all over Pittsburgh. For complete details, visit **PBT.org/performances/open-air**.

ELPC Session News

At the recent Session meeting, the ELPC Elders:

- Heard updates on renewed building usage and possible inperson worship opportunities;
- Examined the new class of elders and deacons, approving them to be ordained and installed:
- Considered motions to receive 7 new members and to approve 6 baptisms; and
- Discussed an invitation to hold a joint meeting with the session of Eastminster Presbyterian Church.

ELPC People

If you have news to share, contact Megan Leisher at MeganL@coh.net or 412.441.3800 x122.

Thanks

The Depperman family extends their thanks for the many cards and gestures of condolence upon the passing of Richard C. Depperman.

Prayers

We offer our prayers and condolences to the family and friends of those who recently passed away:

- Dave Egelston's mother, Catherine
- Sharon Geibel's mother Ruth's husband, Warner
- Tom Kerr's wife, Bunny
- Rita Nordquist's brother, Philip McKee
- Kay Slagle's father







116 South Highland Avenue Pittsburgh, PA 15206









"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

The ELPC building will be closed on Mon., May 31, in observance of Memorial Day.

Sign Up for Our Earth Day **Photo Scavenger Hunt**

Join us Sun., May 2, for a fun-for-all-ages photo scavenger hunt that can be done in Highland Park or your yard. The Children and Family Ministry Team

> will be at the Lake Point Shelter in Highland Park from 1:30–3:30 pm, with hands-on Earth Day activities for all ages!

The photo scavenger hunt will be happening in real time via Flipgrid, so you may join in the fun no matter where you are.

And if you can't join us Sunday afternoon, the photo sharing will remain open all week.

Register by emailing Sara Hackett at SaraH@coh.net for all the details and instructions.

Calling All Graduates

Are you graduating from high school, college, trade school, graduate school, etc. this spring? We would like to celebrate these achievements together! Submit your name, degree, and school attended to Megan Leisher at MeganL@coh.net or 412.441.3800 x122.

Cathedral Concerts Series Presents the Kassia Ensemble & Angwenique

ELPC's Cathedral Concerts series will present a special online performance featuring the Kassia Ensemble and Angwenique on Fri., May 7, 7 pm.

All of the music on the program was composed by living female Black composers. This unique and fascinating concert will be broadcast live on YouTube and Facebook.

For more details, please visit **ELPC.church**.

