



Reaching Out

newsletter of east liberty presbyterian church

June 2021



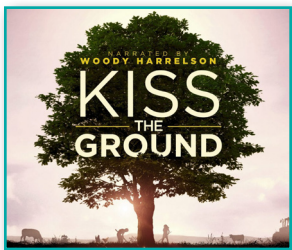
A History of Pride Month

Following Sanctuary worship on **Sun., June 6**, the LGBTQ Ministry and Justice Committee invite you to an online presentation and discussion on the history of Pride Month, led by Jason Lucarelli, MSCP, Albert Schweitzer Fellow for Life.

Join us via Zoom at tiny.cc/pride-history or by calling **646.558.8656**. Enter meeting ID **882 4291 1320** and passcode **306042** when prompted.

Kiss the Ground Viewing and Discussion

What do climate stability, healthy eating, and beautiful landscapes have in common? They all depend on soil quality. Whether or not you've thought about what's underfoot, *Kiss the Ground* will give you a new appreciation for how critical it is to our health and well-being—and our planet's future.



Join the Environmental Team following worship on **Sun., June 13**, for an online viewing of *Kiss the Ground* (45 minutes), as well as a conversation moderated by Stefani Danes.

The documentary examines a revolutionary group of activists, scientists, farmers, and politicians who are leading a global movement of "Regenerative Agriculture." We'll see how dust bowls become

Gardens of Eden, as well as other great examples of the ways we can balance our climate, replenish our vast water supplies, and feed the world. Understanding how important soil is to all life, we'll also discover how important our everyday choices are to sustaining the life of the soil.

Join us via Zoom at tiny.cc/kiss-the-ground or by calling **646.558.8656**. Enter meeting ID **822 2738 0701** and passcode **558594** when prompted.

Celebrating Youth Sunday

Join us for a special service in the Courtyard on **Sun., June 27**, 10 am. ELPC youth will plan and lead worship, graduating seniors will share their Senior Message, 2020 Confirmands will be baptized, and much more!

We give thanks to God for the gift of our youth at ELPC—for their faithfulness, creativity, resilience, patience, joy, and love! Please register for worship or join us via the livestream on Youtube, Facebook, or Zoom.

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

June 6* Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy

Sanctuary Worship | 11 am

June 6* Rev. Dr. Randy Bush

Summer Worship | 10 am

June 13 Rev. Dr. Randy Bush

June 20 Rev. Dr. Randy Bush

June 27 Rev. Heather Schoenewolf

Youth Sunday

Taizé Prayer Service

Wednesdays | 7 pm

Rev. BJ Woodworth

Summer Changes to Our Worship Schedule

As we move into the summer season and continue to re-open our building, please keep in mind the following adjustments to worship during the month of June.

- On **Sun., June 13**, we will shift to our "summer schedule," offering a single service in the Sanctuary at 10 am.
- On **Sun., June 27**, our plan is to celebrate Youth Sunday and move worship outside to the Courtyard.

Pre-registration will continue to be available online for all the Sundays in June, so please visit ELPC.church for updates on both remote and on-site programs, as well as capacity limits for worship services.

East Liberty Presbyterian Church

info@coh.net | 412.441.3800

Staff Leadership

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Pastoral Message

The Rev. Dr. Randall K. Bush, Pastor



My dad never got a chance to go to college. After a short stint in the Navy, he started work at my grandfather's small family business—a metal plating shop in Kansas City, Kansas. Eventually my father ran this business, refinishing silver, chrome, nickel, and brass objects that antique dealers or collectors brought to him. Someone would bring him an old brass cash register or a tarnished silver tea set and he would carefully take it apart, clean it in mild acids, buff and lacquer it to a high gloss shine, and then reassemble everything. He was a craftsman in the fullest sense of the word.

I'm sure many of you are skilled at crafts—able to work with your hands to create, grow, refurbish, and repair different things. We all have certainly benefited from the skills of artisans, whether they work with wood, stone, electronics, or metal. Unfortunately, I'm not sure that we've always valued the fine art of craftsmanship. Why is that?

This topic was brought to my mind by the review of the book *Craft: An American History* by Glenn Adamson. For too long, the handmade products around us have been treated as second-class when compared to machine-made items. This has been an outgrowth of denigrating the traditions and talents of Indigenous people, African Americans, women, and the working class. We might have appreciated the woodcarvings or the quilts and baskets made by various artisans, but our fulsome praise has been heaped on the so-called titans of industry and manufacturing czars. This is due to a long pattern of denigrating “making” and elevating “knowing.” (In philosophical terms, it reflects a Cartesian dualism—named after René Descartes who said, “I think, therefore I am,” and thus valued intellect over manual work.)

This pattern is problematic on many levels, including social, racial, and economic. People who work with their hands likely move slower in their tasks and put a lot of personal attention to the end-product. They are not conveyor belts pumping out detritus for the marketplace; they are creators, giving caring attention to the details of their craft. And more than likely, they are in relationship with the people who benefit from their work. My dad had lots of regular customers whom he would talk with in his shop and who learned to trust his fairness as a businessman and his skill as a craftsman.

Jesus most likely trained as a carpenter. His healing miracles often involved a conversation, a prayer, and a gracious touch extended to set free a mute tongue or unstop deaf ears. He worked with his hands and all he did reflected the values of his heart and soul.

Over the past months, perhaps you have picked up a craft or new skill. Hopefully you've learned to slow down and to find beauty in creating, growing, and craftwork. As we continue to re-emerge and re-connect in the weeks ahead, let us value “making” over simply “knowing.” Let us strive to follow the example of Jesus the carpenter and of God the artisan; and may the Holy Spirit expand our knowledge through the precious, rich art of faithful handicrafts.

Randy Bush

Mission Matters

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

Available Composting Sites and Rules

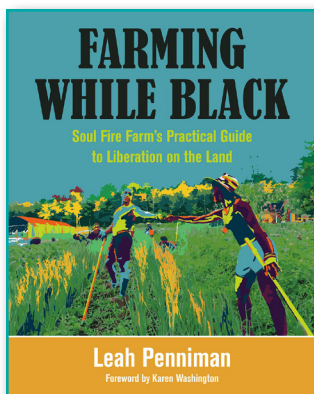
Garfield Community Farm has generously agreed to allow ELPC members and friends to take specific kitchen scraps, yard clippings, and more to a marked bin on their property. They have given us a list of “What you can put into your compost” and “What you should not put into your compost.” And there is no charge! Here’s a brief overview of what can and should not be composted:

- **Good for Compost:** Lawn clippings (if not treated with nonorganic chemicals), kitchen scraps (fruits and vegetables), cardboard, and cardboard egg cartons.
- **Not Good for Compost:** Diseased plants (can cause diseases to spread in the garden); fish and meat scraps, fats, or foods containing these (will rot, smell unpleasant, and attract pests such as rodents); plants treated with toxic pesticides and herbicides (will contaminate compost, soil, and food with toxic chemicals); and bleached paper—eg. office paper (contains toxic chlorine-based chemicals that shouldn’t be composted).

For the complete lists and the location of the bin, please visit ELPC.church or contact Nancy Heastings at n.heastings@comcast.net.

Environmental Book Club Starts New Book

The Environmental Team of the Justice Committee continues their study and activities around nature, regeneration, interdependence, gardening, and farming. We invite you to read Leah Penniman’s book, *Farming While Black: Soul Fire Farm’s Practical Guide to Liberation on the Land*. Our discussion will take place on **Mon., July 12**, 7 pm, hopefully at a place such as Garfield Community Farm.



In 1920, 14% of all land-owning U.S. farmers were Black. Today less than 2% of farms are controlled by Black people—a loss of over 14 million acres and the result of discrimination and dispossession. While farm management is among the whitest of professions, farm labor is predominantly brown and exploited—and people of color disproportionately live in “food apartheid” neighborhoods and suffer from diet-related illness. The system is built on stolen land and stolen labor.

Throughout the chapters, Penniman uplifts the wisdom of the African diasporic farmers and activists whose work informs the techniques described—from

whole farm planning, soil fertility, seed selection, and agroecology, to using whole foods in culturally appropriate recipes, sharing stories of ancestors, and tools for healing from the trauma associated with slavery and economic exploitation on the land. Woven throughout the book is the story of Soul Fire Farm—a national leader in the food justice movement.

For more information, or to tell us you are attending, contact Nancy Heastings at n.heastings@comcast.net.

The Box is Back

The Justice Committee is collecting toiletry items for Allegheny County Jail. Only the following items (in regular size, not travel size) are requested per the Warden’s instructions: **shampoo, conditioner, body wash, bar soap, deodorant, lotion, and toothpaste.**

A donation box is available inside the Highland Avenue Lobby. Thank you in advance for any donations.

Environmental Tip: Electrify Your House

As more renewable generation is added to the grid, electricity will become a greener energy source than natural gas or oil. You can tap into this renewable source by making a few choices now that will likely persist over the next 10–15 years. For example:

- Select an **electric lawn mower** or **electric grill** the next time you need to upgrade.
- Consider **electric tank** or **electric heat pump** hot water heating when your current hot water heater comes to the end of its life.
- If you make any kitchen upgrades, an **induction stove and cooktops** are excellent options—not only is the technology much more efficient in heating and cooking food, it’s also a healthier choice as it avoids indoor air pollution associated with burning gas. And induction cooktops take no time to cool down.
- You can even find a **heat pump clothes dryer**, which is more efficient than all other clothes dryers—except the clothes line!

For more advice on these matters, contact Nancy Heastings at n.heastings@comcast.net.

Christian Education

The Rev. Heather Schoenewolf, Associate Pastor for Educational Ministries

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

High School | Grades 9–12

Join us in the Courtyard on **Sun., June 6**, 12:30–1:30 pm, for our last class of the year. Please RSVP with Sara Hackett. After class, we will hold a Youth Sunday planning meeting from 1:30–2 pm.

Journey with Scripture

Facilitators: Lora Bethea and Jan Lyle Irvin

“Let all that breathes praise God.”—Psalm 150:6

The last verse of the Psalms offers a breathtaking conclusion to this year’s Journey with Scripture class, in light of our various social challenges. The verse proclaims a full release, an extensive permission, and a call for an inclusive, biodiverse creation that gives and reflects full recognition of God—who lies both beyond our comprehension and yet abides with us. Breath. Life. This month, we conclude our reflections from *The Apocrypha and the Apocalypse*. We give thanks for this past year’s readings and reflections that have moved between Heaven and Earth, between angels and earthly things, between the just and the unjust. We give thanks for class participants, facilitators, staff support and finally for the capability to meet together via the internet while we are apart. Praise God!

June 6: Psalm 150 and concluding reflections

Parenting Circle

Facilitator: Trish Buben

June 6: This Life That Is Ours

We will wrap up our discussion of Lauren Burdette’s book, *This Life That Is Ours*.

Soul Food

Facilitators: Rev. Joe Hajdu and other class members

June 6: A Question of Safety

We will discuss chapter 8 of *In My Grandmother’s House*, “A Question of Safety.”

June 20: Summer Session

We will have the first of four summer sessions to complete our discussion of *In My Grandmother’s House*. The time of those sessions has yet to be determined.

Contact the Rev. Joe Hajdu at hajdu625@comcast.net for more details.

Seekers

Facilitator: Gwen Puza | gpuza9@gmail.com

June 6: Graham Standish Discusses Mystical Hearing of God

In this video, the Rev. Dr. Graham Standish discusses learning to be aware of God talking to us continually, with the Spirit working through everything. We can develop a mystical sense of having an inner ear that is always listening for God’s voice and guidance. He also discusses how we in the church should embrace those who speak of near-death experiences in their lives.

Rev. Dr. Graham Standish is the executive director of Samaritan Counseling, Guidance, and Consulting in Sewickley. He is the author of numerous books on Christian Mysticism, an adjunct professor at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, a spiritual director, and clergy coach. He also served as a pastor for 22 years.

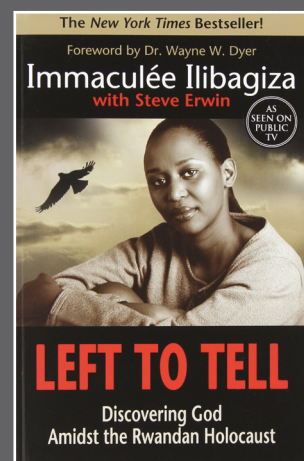
Seekers’ Summer Reading

In 1994, Immaculée Ilibagiza was a college student who was caught up in the three-month slaughter of more than one million Tutsis (an ethnic group from the African Great Lakes region) in Rwanda. She was a Tutsi who survived by hiding in the bathroom of her Hutu pastor’s bathroom—with seven other women in a three-by-four-foot bathroom for 91 days. They had to be quiet at all times, could not speak to one another, and could not lie down to sleep.

During this time, she discovered the power of prayer, eventually shedding her fear of death and forging a profound and lasting relationship with God. She emerged from the hideout with a love so strong that she was able seek out and forgive her family’s killers.

This summer, the Seekers class invites you to read *Left to Tell*. In this amazing book, Immaculée shares her story and how she maintained awareness of God being with her during this time. This fall, we will listen to a video of her speaking about how her relationship with God enables her to now speak about forgiveness toward the murders.

Carnegie Library has copies available to borrow. Ask them to send one to your local branch.



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.

Tues., June 22: High School Mission Retreat Planning Session 7 pm

Youth in grades 9–12 are invited to our High School Mission Retreat at Crestfield Camp and Conference Center, **Tues.–Fri., Aug 10–13**, for a combination of service projects around the camp, worship, Bible study, and a lot of group fun after being apart for so long. We will be using Crestfield's space, but planning our own schedule, meals, and worship. Interested youth and their parents are asked to attend this informational meeting via Zoom.

Sun.–Mon., July 11–12: Middle School Mission Days

Youth in grades 6–8 will be sleeping in tents in the Courtyard and volunteering in our neighborhood. There will be some water balloon fun, too!

Sun.–Sat., July 25–31: Trinity Youth Conference

Trinity Youth Conference is happening this summer in Shellsburg, Pennsylvania! TYC is a regional Presbyterian leadership conference for youth who have completed grade 9 and college-age young adults with workshops, camp games, and small groups. This year, ELPC's Ramsey Lewand is a member of the planning team. Information about cost, workshops, registration, and schedule can be found at TrinityYouthConference.org.

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.

Fri.–Sat., June 11–12: Contemplative Activism Retreat with Cole Arthur Riley

YAMs are invited to join the Spiritual Life Committee for a Contemplative Activism Retreat led by Cole Arthur Riley. Together, we will explore how to adopt spiritual practices that suspend between the contemplative and the pursuit of justice. You may be familiar with Cole's daily prayers on social media. She is the creator and writer of Black Liturgies—a project seeking to integrate the truths of Black dignity, lament, rage, justice, and rest into written prayers. Follow [@blackliturgist](https://www.instagram.com/blackliturgist) on Instagram and Facebook, or visit BlackLiturgist.com to read more about her. The cost is \$50 (scholarships are available). Please register by **Fri., June 4**.

Tues., June 22: Spiritual Fermentation Series Finale 6–7:30 pm



Let us join together with Pastor BJ at a local brewery for our last Spiritual Fermentation gathering! As we enjoy the process of brewing and look back at the contemplative practices we have discussed, we invite you to share an everyday ordinary activity, an interest, hobby, or passion of yours that you currently engage in and/or would like to further explore as a space to connect with, notice, and be in with God. Contemplate the development of a plan for how you will actually engage in and do this activity as an embodied practice. RSVP by **Fri., June 18**.

Summer Kids' Ministry

Throughout summer, we will explore the theme of *Sanctuary—God is With Us Always* during monthly mini-sessions of Vacation Church School.

On **Sun., June 27**, 2:30–5 pm, families with kids in preschool through grade 5 (completed) are invited to join us in Highland Park for worship, recreation, crafts, and prayer as we explore God's promises in the beautiful prayer of Psalm 23. Together, we will examine how God's promises come to life using images of things found in nature: sheep, green pastures, water, and shadows. Through fun and fellowship, we will remember the good news that God is with us always, wherever we are!

Notes: Pre-registration is required. Kids will remain with their parent/caregiver throughout the event, and COVID protocols will be in place.

Volunteers are Needed

We are seeking youth and adult volunteers to assist with our Summer Kid's Ministry's monthly mini-sessions. Volunteers are needed to:

- Lead or support activity stations—such as worship, art, recreation or prayer;
- Register families;
- Welcome and greet families;
- Shepherd groups to their stations;
- Assemble materials

Volunteers may sign up to serve for one, two, or all three of the sessions, but are asked to serve for the entire event for which they sign up. Mandatory training will be held on **Mon., June 14**, 6:30–8:30 pm. If you cannot make that time, contact Pastor Heather to schedule a make-up session. Volunteer forms are located at ELPC.church.

ELPC Hosts Vigil for Racial Justice

In April, ELPC hosted an ecumenical, interfaith Vigil for Racial Justice. Members, friends, and community members gathered together in solidarity to acknowledge how the struggle for true justice extends before us, calling us toward a horizon of equality, equity, and a Beloved Community.



Presbyterian Women

Tues., June 15: Stay Connected This Summer 12 pm

Presbyterian Women invites all women to gather on Zoom to spend an hour listening, sharing, and praying. Bring your lunch, if you'd like. For more details, email PW.ELPC@gmail.com.

Spiritual Life

The Rev. BJ Woodworth, Director of Spiritual Life Ministries

Summer Silence and Stillness

As we all begin to adjust to life on the other side of our rigorous quarantine and slowly re-enter life in a bit of closer proximity to one another, the Spiritual Life Committee is offering a few opportunities to be together in silence and stillness.

Fri.–Sat., June 11–12: Contemplative Activism Retreat with Cole Arthur Riley

We are excited to bring in Cole Arthur Riley to lead a retreat on Contemplative Activism over the weekend of June 11–12. 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.



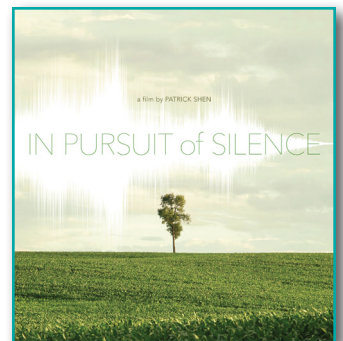
Register at tiny.cc/contemplative-activism by **Fri., June 4**. The cost is **\$50** (scholarships are available). Like our previous online retreats, we will gather via Zoom at prescheduled times. Cole will speak and guide us in prayer, a reflection, and an embodied activity during each of these sessions, as well as give suggestions and prompts for our own solitude and contemplation in between each session.

Sat., July 10: Silent Walk on the Butler-Freeport Community Trail 9–11:30 am

We will gather in Freeport at the Laneville Trailhead of Butler-Freeport Community Trail (100 Main St., Freeport, 16229), walk in silence along the path at our own pace, stop, linger along the stream, sit, read, be in nature in silence with God and one another. We will regather back at the trailhead to share reflections and observations at 11:30 am. RSVP to Norma Meyer by **Fri., July 9**.

Sat., Aug. 14: In Pursuit of Silence | Film Viewing and Conversation 7–9 pm

In Pursuit of Silence is a documentary that meditatively explores our relationship with silence, sound, and the impact of noise on our lives. Beginning with an ode to John Cage's groundbreaking composition, *4'33"*, the film takes us on an immersive cinematic journey around the globe—from a traditional tea ceremony in Kyoto, to the streets of the loudest city on the planet, Mumbai, during the wild festival season—and inspires us to experience silence and celebrate the wonders of our world. RSVP to Norma Meyer by **Fri., Aug. 13**.



Staff Spotlight | Megan Leisher

If you haven't had a chance yet, meet Megan Leisher, ELPC's administrative assistant for Pastors Randy, Heather, and Patrice. Before joining ELPC in February 2020, Megan owned a plant shop in Garfield, worked in landscaping, and did drywall finishing. Keep reading to learn more about her.



Working at ELPC | I enjoy getting to know people at the church. While I've attended ELPC for several years, I've been able to connect names and faces as an employee.

Just for Fun | I enjoy gardening; playing basketball, catch, and chess; and boxing!

Favorite TV Show | I'm currently getting a kick out of watching *Ted Lasso*.

Dream Vacation | Turks and Caicos

On the Bucket List | I'd like to buy a house, take my daughter on a trip to China, and compete in a boxing fight!

LGBTQ Ministry

Wil Forrest, Coordinator of LGBTQ Ministry

Pittsburgh Pride 2021

All are invited to engage in the (mostly virtual) events being planned for Pittsburgh Pride 2021. ELPC will again seek to lift up God's love for all God's people at Pride events. Allies and LGBTQIA+ folks alike are welcome. For more details, contact Wil Forrest at Wil@coh.net or 412.441.3800 x118.



Note: Once a schedule of events is finalized, we will share those details. Also, there will be no Spiritual Gathering in June, as all folks are encouraged to spend time at Pride events.

God Created You. God Loves You. Be Yourself.

ELPC Session News

At the recent Session meeting, the ELPC Elders:

- Welcomed three new first-term elders and three new second-term elders,
- Received four new members and approved four baptism requests,
- Continued to make arrangements for the safe re-opening of our church and in-person attendance at worship services, and
- Celebrated a generous \$5,000 gift from the endowment of Mt. Washington Presbyterian Church that will support our mission ministries.

ELPC People

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

Prayers

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

- Erich Stein and Polly McQueen on the passing of Erich's son, Max.
- Alex Hornezes on the passing of his wife, Kimberly.

In early May, we ordained and installed our incoming class of deacons and elders. We are grateful for their gifts and willingness to serve Christ through the ministries of our congregation.

Elders | Valire Copeland, Bob Forloines, Nick Genger-Boeldt, Brittney Krieger, Corinne Krimmel, Jill Millard, and Tiffany Sudar.

Deacons | Peta Harrigan Cole, David Cowan, Molly Davidson-Welling, Dylan Geibel, Drew Simpson, Tom Sturgill, and Susan Wadsworth-Booth.



“...inviting all to join our diverse, inclusive family of faith, transcending boundaries of race, class, ability, culture, age, gender and sexual identity to become one in Christ.”

ELPC Building Updates

- As the church building is intentionally and incrementally reopening this summer, please visit **ELPC.church** and/or call the church for more information about services, programs, and access.
- The ELPC building will be closed on **Juneteenth, Sat., June 19.**



Cathedral Concerts Series Presents French Feast – ENCORE

ELPC's Cathedral Concerts series will present *French Feast – ENCORE* on **Fri., June 11**, 7 pm. The special online performance will feature music from the 2019 Cathedral Concert with The Brass Roots, organist Dr. Ed Moore, and conductor Dr. Stephen Gage.

The concert will be broadcast on YouTube and Facebook. For more details, please visit **ELPC.church**.

Cleaning Up the Church Grounds

Are you interested in helping keep our church grounds looking beautiful? We need volunteers to assist with gardening and picking up litter. Contact Megan Leisher at **MeganL@coh.net** or **412.441.3800 x122** for details.

YAM Camping Trip at Raccoon Creek State Park

Over the weekend of **June 25–27**, join seasoned and first-time campers for fun and fellowship in the great outdoors! We'll spend time together enjoying all that Raccoon Creek State Park has to offer—like boating, trails, swimming, and campgrounds. Registration and a fee of **\$20** is required (scholarships are available).

Talk with Kelli Booher ASAP about your potential interest in camping or visiting for the day, as well as transportation. While most who go will supply their own transportation (consider carpooling as appropriate), a few fully vaccinated people may ride in the church van.

