

Reaching Out

newsletter of east liberty presbyterian church

May 2022

Worshiping on Marathon Sunday



After a two-year hiatus, the Pittsburgh Marathon will have runners once again. This means that we will not be able to host in-person worship on **Sun., May 1**, due to the race's route around East Liberty.

On this day, we will offer a shortened, pre-recorded worship service at 11 am, which will be available on our website at **ELPC.church**, as well as on **YouTube**, and **Facebook**. It will contain a musical prelude, church announcements and prayers, a video from local photographer Beth Kukucka, and a sermon on "keeping the Sabbath" from Pastor Randy.

We will miss seeing you in person, but trust you'll be back in the pews on Sun., May 8, as we ordain and install our incoming class of ELPC officers.



Celebrating the Buses

Please join us following Sanctuary worship on **Sun., May 15**, for a farewell celebration in honor of our departing Senior Pastor Randy Bush and his wife Beth.

We'll gather in the Social Hall for fellowship and to say "thank you" and send our prayers as they begin a new journey in their ministry and lives.

A box will be available to collect cards, sharing reflections and best wishes for the Buses. Cards also can be mailed to ELPC, c/o Wil Forrest.

We're also seeking photos for a slideshow. If you have any that you'd like to include, please send them to Norma Meyer at Norma@coh.net by **Fri., May 13**.

Rejoice! May the God of Peace be with you.

-Philippians 4:4-7

Sunday Services

**Celebration of the Lord's Supper*

Journey Worship | 8:45 am

Theme: One Foot Forward

May 1 No Service
May 8 Rev. Heather Schoenewolf
May 15 Rev. Dr. Randy Bush
May 22 Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy
May 29 Rev. BJ Woodworth

Sanctuary Worship | 11 am

May 1 Rev. Dr. Randy Bush
May 8 Rev. Dr. Randy Bush
May 15 Rev. Dr. Randy Bush
May 22 Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy
May 29 Rev. BJ Woodworth

Taizé Prayer Service

Wednesdays | 7 pm
Rev. BJ Woodworth

Summer Worship Schedule Begins in June

We will begin our summer worship schedule on **Sun., June 12**, 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!



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. Patrice L. Fowler-Searcy

Associate Pastor for Mission Ministries

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The Rev. Heather Schoenewolf

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The Rev. BJ Woodworth

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Pastoral Message

The Rev. Dr. Randall K. Bush, Pastor



This year, May is an in-between month on the liturgical calendar. It falls between the two church holidays of Easter (April 17) and Pentecost (June 5). It is still a special month with its celebration of Mother's Day and Memorial Day, along with Cinco de Mayo, running of the Kentucky Derby, and National Barbecue Day. But for the church, it is an in-between month—remembering a time when the first disciples were aware of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, yet still waiting for that movement of the Spirit that changed the world forever.

I also am cognizant of the fact that this is the last Pastor's Letter I'll write for the ELPC newsletter. Just as Beth and I enter into a season of "in-between" transitions from Pittsburgh to Maryland, ELPC will enter into a similar time of transition and expectancy. I will be learning about the needs of a new congregation, helping them to eventually call a new senior pastor; you will be continuing the good ministry work and worship that are hallmarks of our church, as you too look ahead toward a time of both interim (and eventual) called pastoral leadership.

Every life has these moments of transition. It may have happened to you between high school and college, between an old job and a new job, between the end of one relationship and the start of another. It may have been marked by the days between singleness and getting married, between pregnancy and giving birth, between caring for an elderly parent and then grieving their death. These in-between times may have felt unsettling, but in retrospect, many of them were times of the greatest personal growth. It is in these moments that we ask ourselves what we truly value, what we deeply hope for, what we understand to be true for ourselves and our place in the world.

If you look carefully at the scripture descriptions of this "in-between" season, you'll notice that the big events happened on festival days (Passover/Easter, Pentecost)—when the Jerusalem streets were crowded with people all gathered together. But the resurrection events happened in the quieter, in-between times—when the risen Christ appeared to disciples walking on the road to Emmaus, or when Christ was seen by the disciples while they were out fishing one ordinary day. I think the good news is that resurrection power is best seen in these in-between moments of our lives. It is in times of transition, of movement from one place to another, that Christ is near to us and lovingly guiding us forward.

My sincere prayer is that Christ continues to be that resurrection presence of hope for each of you and for ELPC—both in the transition season and the years ahead. I am deeply grateful for the love you've shown me and my family over my time here. Know that you'll remain in my heart and prayers. I'll close with the words of the apostle Paul: *Rejoice in the Lord always. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. And the peace of God which surpasses all understanding will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*

Randy Bush

Mission Matters

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



Sat., May 21: Neighborhood Earth Care 10 am–3 pm
Join Tree Pittsburgh and your ELPC friends and neighbors to care for and beautify our East Liberty neighborhood! We'll be making a difference together by mulching, trimming, weeding, and tending.

We'll be meeting at the corner of S. Highland and Penn Avenues. Sign up required. Contact Nancy Heastings at n.heastings@comcast.net for details.

Sponsored in partnership by the ELPC Environmental Team of the Justice Committee and the ELPC Neighbors Committee.



Sun., May 22: GCF Sidewalk Seedling Sale 12–2 pm
Garfield Community Farm will be hosting a Sidewalk Seedling Sale on Penn Avenue in front of ELPC. Stop by after Sanctuary worship and get started on your garden while supporting a local neighborhood community farm!

For more information, contact Nancy Heastings at n.heastings@comcast.net.

Brought to you by the ELPC Environmental Team of the Justice Committee in partnership with the ELPC Neighbors Committee.

Trees for Life | An ELPC Baptism Ministry



Beginning this spring, we're happy to announce that for each child baptized at ELPC, tree seedlings will be planted in the Tree Pittsburgh seed nursery.

The Trees for Life ministry is a partnership of the Environmental Team of the Justice Committee, the ELPC Board of Deacons, and Tree Pittsburgh. For more information, contact Susan Spangler at sspanglerlcs@gmail.com.

ELPC Supports OHM Marathon Runners

Consider making a financial donation for those running in the Pittsburgh Marathon races in support of Open Hand Ministries (OHM). As a *Marathon Run for a Reason* charity, OHM's goal is to raise \$15,000.

OHM is an important ministry partner for ELPC, seeking equitable housing in our East End neighborhood. To support ELPC's Marathon Relay Team; Open Hands & Determined Feet; and runners, Bob Forloines, Molly Davidson-Welling, Eddie Willson, or the Rev. David Phillips, please contact Bob Forloines at rforloines@gmail.com or 610.331.1134, or visit bit.ly/OHMdonate.

Making a Difference ...Together

In accordance with our 2022 ELPC Earth Day theme, *Invest in Our Planet: Turn Hope Into Action...Together*, find a partner—a friend, family member, neighbor—and commit to taking action steps together to invest in the well being of our planet and your community.

Pledge to support a local environmental group, start a garden, buy less, evaluate and reduce your 2022 carbon footprint, plant a tree, support legislation for green energy and infrastructure, eat local... Make a difference, together!

And, join the Environmental Team of the Justice Committee on **Sun., May 22, 12:30 pm**, for our *Making a Difference Together* panel presentation, led by Local Active Hope Innovators!

■ Building an Eco-Friendly Community

Presented by Stefani Danes, founder of Rachel Carson Ecovillage



■ Engaging Principles of Community Permaculture

Presented by John Creasy, founder of Garfield Community Farm



■ The Solution to Pollution is Renewable, It's Doable!

Presented by Fred Kraybill, renewable energy advocate



Attend in person in the McKelvy Room or **online via Zoom**. Light refreshments, stimulating ideas, good company, and inspiration will be provided!

For more information, contact Nancy Heastings at n.heastings@comcast.net.

Christian Education

The Rev. Heather Schoenewolf, Associate Pastor for Educational Ministries

Note: Adult classes meet in person and via Zoom on Sundays, 9:45 am.

Children and Youth

Classes for children age 3 up through grade 5 are now meeting in person. Youth continue to meet in the Second Floor Parlor. Contact Sara Hackett at SaraH@coh.net for more details.

Journey with Scripture

Facilitators: Lora Bethea and Jan Lyle Irvin

“...love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Contribute to the needs of the saints, extend hospitality to strangers.”—Romans 12:10, 13

In May's Easter season, we complete most of the readings in this year's *P's and Q's of Scripture*. This includes the 8th century prophet Micah, the Dead Sea Scrolls (Qumran caves), the sayings of Jesus (Q sayings) and Paul's letter to the Romans. We continue to reflect upon the cosmic and intimate proportions of salvation offered to us in Jesus Christ including the ever renewed call of acceptance and steadfast love. Come join the journey!

May 1: No Class

May 8: Micah 6:6–16; Qumran (selected reading); Romans 11:1–36; Luke (Q) 15:4–10; 17:1–4

May 15: Micah 7:1–7; Qumran (selected reading); Romans 12:1–13:14; Luke (Q) 17:6, 21–24, 37

May 22: Micah 7:8–20; Qumran (selected reading); Romans 14:1–15:13; Luke (Q) 17:26–35, 19:12–26; 22:28–30

Parenting Circle

Facilitator: Trish Buben

May: *The Sandbox Revolution*

We will continue discussing *The Sandbox Revolution: Raising Kids for a Just World*. Written by parents who also are writers, pastors, teachers, organizers, artists, gardeners, and activists, this anthology offers diverse experiences on topics that include education, money, anti-racism, resistance, spirituality, disability justice, and Earth care.

Soul Food

Facilitators: Rev. Joe Hajdu and other class members

May: *Wholehearted Faith*

On May 1 (Zoom only), 8, 15, and 22, we will discuss short readings by Rachel Held Evans, Barbara Brown Taylor, and Shauna Niequist.

New participants are always welcome! For details, contact the Rev. Joe Hajdu at hajdu625@comcast.net.

Seekers

Facilitator: Gwen Puza | gpuza9@gmail.com

May 1: *Unorthodox War: Religion and the Russian Invasion of Ukraine*

Many of those fighting against each other in the war in Ukraine share the same religious views and commitments. Yet, religion lies at the heart of the present conflict—one that stretches back decades.

In this webinar interview, the Rev. Dr. Nicholas E. Denysenko—author of *The Orthodox Church in Ukraine: A Century of Separation*—discusses the religious aspects of the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

May 8: *PC(USA) Mission Worker Shares Her Perspective on the War Between Ukraine and Russia*

Ellen Smith, regional liaison for Central and Eastern Europe, PC(USA) World Mission, will share her views on the war in Ukraine from a 20-year perspective across Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Poland. She also will introduce partners from these 20 years and what's happening today. How are they responding in each place and how are they not? It is important to find signs of hope in the midst of this tragedy. It's important to find humanity in the midst of brutality.

May 15 and 22: *Focusing Our Values, Ethics, and Moral Energy to Transform the U.S. Healthcare System*

- **May 15:** We will first explore and discuss foundational Western cultural assumptions that we know of as the “American Way of Life” and how they function to sustain our current healthcare system, using Miguel De La Torre's *Liberative Ethics*.
- **May 22:** We will explore and discuss what changes to those assumptions would be made if decision-making in the U.S. healthcare system was approached from a liberative Christian view. We will touch upon areas such as a renewed medical education, decisions on Medicare/Medicaid funding and regulations, and private insurance, all with an eye to equity and eliminating the life expectancy disparities as they are now.

Our presenter for these two weeks is ELPC member Margaret (Meg) Park, M.Div., alumni of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, and owner of Community Wellness Consultancy. In addition to consulting, she is a researcher and educator. Her audiences and clients include medical professionals, patients, payers, and academics. She is currently writing a book on the transformation of the U.S. healthcare system based in liberation ethics.

Children & Youth Ministry

Sara Hackett, Coordinator of Christian Education & Youth Ministry

Wed., May 11: Middle School Mission Trip Meeting 6:30–7 pm

Youth and parents are invited to a Middle School Mission Trip meeting in the Harambe Room or on Zoom (meeting ID 402 081 6710). We will discuss details about the mission work, fun activities, and COVID policies, and youth will help us plan the worship theme and meals for the week.

Our Middle School Mission Trip will be held **July 10–15**, for youth who have completed grade 6–8. We will be staying at Crestfield Camp in Slippery Rock.



Sat.–Sun., May 14–15: Mission Overnight

Youth in grades 8–12 are invited to a Mission Overnight! We'll meet at ELPC on Saturday, 10 am, and spend the day serving in our community. That night, we'll spend the night camping at the church (in the Courtyard if the weather permits).

Youth must be vaccinated to attend. Participation in the Mission Overnight is a requirement for attending our Summer Mission Trip to Memphis, Tennessee, August 6–17.

Sun., May 29: Tween Gym Night 4–6 pm

Tweens in grades 4–6 will be gathering for pizza and games in the church gym. RSVP to Sara Hackett. We will stay at a safe distance while eating and wear masks the rest of the time.

Youth Volunteers Needed for VCS

Teen volunteers in grades 6–12 are a HUGE part of what makes VCS successful. Visit ELPC.church to learn more and to register as a volunteer.

LGBTQ Ministry

Wil Forrest, Coordinator of LGBTQ Ministry

Sun., May 22: Spiritual Gathering 12:30 pm

Join us at our LGBTQ Ministry's next Spiritual Gathering—either in person at the church or online via Zoom. Allies and LGBTQIA+ folks alike welcome!

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



**God Created You.
God Loves You.
Be Yourself.**

Registration is Open for VCS 2022

ELPC will be hosting Vacation Church School for children in pre-K (age 4 and potty-trained) through grade 5 (completed), during the week of **June 20–24**, 9 am–3 pm. Our theme will be *Passports to Peace*. This interactive curriculum encourages children to listen to and learn from people who are different, notice the needs of others and seek to help, work to keep everyone safe, and refuse to respond to conflict with violence.



Youth in grades 6–12 are invited to serve as volunteers, and adult volunteers of all ages will be needed to help ensure this summer's program is a success!

Visit ELPC.church for more information, as well as registration forms for campers and volunteers.

club one sixteen

Kids in grade 1–12 are invited to **club one sixteen**, ELPC's mid-week program for youth. We gather each Wednesday, 4:30–6:30 pm, for Bible Study, recreation, relaxation and dinner. Youth in grades 6 and up will be continuing to explore the theme of perseverance; and youth in grades 1–5 will explore a different Bible story each week.

Our last day for **club one sixteen** will be **Wed., May 11**.

Furniture Collection for Refugee Families

The ELPC Justice Committee will be collecting gently used furniture to be distributed amongst incoming refugee families on **Sat., May 14**, 9 am–4 pm, at the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary Parking lot.

We will be collecting the following items—in good condition, without rips, stains, or in need of repair!

- **Living Room** | Couches (7 feet or less in length), love seats, arm chairs/recliners, coffee tables, end tables, table/ floor lamps with clean shade, small bookcases (no sofa beds)
- **Dining Room** | Tables, chairs, buffet cabinet 4–5 feet, corner cabinets (no China cupboards)
- **Kitchen** | Dishes, glassware, water pitchers, coffee pots, tea pots, tea kettles, microwaves, pots, pans, skillets, woks, toaster, kitchen utensils, bread pans, cookie sheets, mixing bowls, serving bowls
- **Bedroom** | Twin or double bedframes only, nightstands, small tables, hanging mirrors, dressers (prefer upright), twin/double clean sheets, blankets (furniture should not be bulky or heavy)
- **Bath** | Clean towels and washcloths, clean shower curtains and rings
- **Children's Toys** | Books, puzzles, soccer balls

You will need to bring the furniture to the drop off location. Volunteers will unload the furniture and load it into trucks.

If you'd like to volunteer or ask questions, please contact Carol Chonoska at **724.272.9722** or carolchonoska@gmail.com.

Presbyterian Women

PW Bible Study: What My Grandmothers Taught Me

Mon., May 2 7–8:30 pm | Tues., May 3 10 am–12 pm
Through the stories of outsiders and marginalized people, we see the Kingdom of God, in which the last are made first. This final lesson summarizes what the grandmothers of our faith have taught us and imagines what they may have taught Jesus.

Join us for our lesson, *What Are These Women Doing in a Place Like This?* (Matthew 1). Both sessions will meet on Zoom. For more information, email PW.ELPC@gmail.com.



Save the Date: PW Gathering at ELPC

Presbyterian Women invites all women to a special gathering at ELPC for fellowship, prayer, and study on **Sat., June 11**, 9 am–1 pm. We also will enjoy lunch at noon. Join us and get to know women from other Presbyterian Churches in the East End.

The event is free, but advance registration is required. Email PW.ELPC@gmail.com for details.



Decolonizing our Spiritual Practices

Join us on **Sat., June 4**, 9 am–3pm, at ELPC or on Zoom for a day of teaching, conversation, and spiritual practice, as we seek to continue in our journey to be a Matthew 25 church and decolonize our spiritual practices.

We will be led by Leeann Shaw Younger. Under her leadership, we will look at the world and the story of Jesus through the eyes of those impacted by the work of colonial missionaries here in the U.S. and around the world. We will deepen our relationship with the Divine by considering how we might begin to unlearn the spiritual practices we've inherited that ignore and even denigrate the way indigenous cultures see the world and the Divine. We will consider what we can learn about the story of Jesus through the eyes of those finding a story of liberation and healing for both our human and other-than-human relatives.

RSVP to Norma Meyer at Norma@coh.net by **Sun., May 29**. The suggested donation is \$10 (lunch included).

About Our Facilitator

Leeann Shaw Younger is the lead pastor of Cityview Church in Pittsburgh's East Deutschtown/Spring Garden neighborhood. She co-founded the Evangelical Covenant Church congregation in 2010 with her husband, Wayne. Leeann has a breadth of vocational experiences in her background as a nonprofit executive leader, campus minister, and pastor, but most recently has enjoyed her role as a Democratic committeewoman. She is in the process of completing a Master of Theological Studies, with a focus on decolonizing church practice from the Pacific School of Religion.





Dear ELPC,

I am deeply grateful to have spent the last two years with ELPC. You all have taught me so much about how to live out your faith in service as peacemakers and justice-seekers. You have taught me what is possible when we say “yes” first, and discern how to make ministry possible in a new way. This was true as we navigated how to do virtual and hybrid ministry.

It was true as you said yes to learning Spanish as a spiritual practice. And it was true when you said yes to having a seminary intern work from Mexico for almost half the time I’ve been with you.

Through serving at ELPC, I have learned about my call as a teacher, preacher, and caregiver. With your help, I have discerned that I want to become a church pastor. Thank you for your faithfulness, your accompaniment, and your encouragement.

Peace to you until we meet again,

Kathryn

Consider How the Wildflowers Grow



Consider how the wildflowers grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. (Luke 12:27)

Would you like to help ELPC live into its commitment to care for God’s green earth? Please plan to join the Gardening Crew on **Sat., May 21**, 9 am–12 pm, for their annual volunteer flower planting day!

Each spring, a group of dedicated members and friends refresh the Highland Avenue entrance with beautiful, flowering plants, so it is vibrant and welcoming, and the Courtyard, so it is a lovely setting for summer weddings and worship.

Green thumbs are not required—just bring your energy, curiosity, and a pair of work gloves to the Highland driveway around 9 am. If you’re interested in helping, or would like to learn more about this and other upcoming garden workdays, email Don Breitbarth at donbreitbarth@gmail.com.

Part-time Gardener Wanted

Are you inspired by God’s beautiful creation? The Property Committee is looking for someone to help maintain the flower beds around the church on a regular basis, especially the Rain Garden that extends along Penn and Whitfield. This paid position would require approximately three hours per week from May to the end of October. This person also would work closely with the Gardening Crew to help organize and lead volunteer workdays throughout the summer. If you are interested, contact Don Breitbarth at donbreitbarth@gmail.com.

Session News

At its recent called meeting, the ELPC Session:

- Examined the incoming class of elders and deacons, prior to their ordination and installation on Sunday, May 8;
- Heard a report about progress in creating an Interim Head of Staff search committee;
- Discussed events related to Pastor Randy’s final Sunday (May 15) and farewell celebration; and
- Approved calling a congregational meeting on May 22 to end Pastor Randy’s call and nominate Pastors Heather and Patrice as acting co-pastors.

ELPC People

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

Good News

- Congratulations to **Jonathan, Davi**, and **Christian Welty**; and **Journee Renee Jarvis** on their recent baptisms
- Join us in welcoming our new members and friends: **Ashley Nicole Ames & Michelle Stiller, Rose Doerfler, Genna Frederick, Cathleen Malmstrom, and Nancy Ann Pieffer.**

Prayers

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

- Peta Harrigan Cole and Derek Harrigan on the passing of Peta’s brother and Derek’s uncle, Phillip Harrigan
- Joanie James on the passing of her young granddaughter Wren (daughter of Caitlin and Preston James)
- Cathleen Malmstrom on the passing of her mother
- Rev. Cynthia Jackson on the passing of her husband, the Rev. Jared Jackson

“...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.”

Building Closure

The ELPC building will be closed on **Memorial Day, Mon., May 30.**

A Celebration with J. Richard Szeremany

The Rev. Dr. J. Richard Szeremany cordially invites you to join the festive celebration of 73 years of ministry of word and sacrament and ministry of music to the glory of God on **Sun., May 8**, 3 pm, in the ELPC Sanctuary.

Come be inspired by organists J. Richard Szeremany, Michael P. Frank, Dr. Edward Alan Moore and Jon Tyillian. And enjoy the glorious sounds of the East Liberty Octet singing some of Richard's favorites, directed by Dr. Moore, and pianist the Rev. Dr. Randy Bush playing Beethoven.

Join us for an interesting, historical narrative of Richard's life.



Music in May

ELPC's *Cathedral Concerts* series will host two concerts this month! Join us in the Sanctuary, or watch the livestreams on YouTube and Facebook.

May 15: Organ Concert 3 pm

ELPC and the Organ Artists Series of Pittsburgh are co-sponsoring an organ concert presented by Jan Kraybill.



Dr. Kraybill is principal organist for the Dome and Spire Organ Foundation, an affiliate of the international headquarters of Community of Christ, in Independence, Missouri, and organ conservator at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts in Kansas City. Her recording of *The Orchestral Organ* was nominated for a Grammy as Best Classical Instrumental Solo Album in 2020.

ELPC members should contact Dr. Ed for complimentary tickets.

May 29: Brass and Organ Concert 3 pm

The Brass Roots and conductor/arranger Jim Nova return to team up with Dr. Moore in a concert of music adapted from movies and video games. There is no admission charge. A freewill offering will be accepted.

