

Getting Back Together on Rally Day



Rally Day is the first day of our church's programmatic year—a day when Church School classes resume for persons of all ages and when we return to our traditional Sunday worship schedule.

Join us on **Sun., Sept. 11**, to celebrate coming together as a church once more, with a fall kickoff more similar

to years past—including a continental breakfast at the beginning of Church School; joyful music at our vibrant Journey service, 8:45 am, led by our Praise Team; and our traditional Sanctuary service, 11 am, featuring the music of The Brass Roots alongside Dr. Ed and our Chancel Choir.

The Children and Family Ministry Committee will host a breakfast beginning at 9:45 am. Adult Church School classes will offer bagels and coffee in their classrooms, so that classmates can greet friends—both old and new! Children and youth are invited to gather, along with their parents/caregivers, in the Courtyard for a light breakfast and an opportunity to meet their teachers. After breakfast is served, children will head to their classrooms.

Worshipping with the Rev. Shanea Leonard



On **Sun., Sept. 25**, we're excited to welcome the Rev. Shanea Leonard (they/them) as our special guest preacher at our Journey and Sanctuary worship services. And Mike Tomaro and his combo will provide music.

The Rev. Leonard is a pastor, teacher, consultant, community activist, and modern-day abolitionist. They currently carry out their justice mandate as the national Coordinator for Gender & Racial Justice for the PC(USA) in the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

A native of Philadelphia, the Rev. Leonard received their B.A. from the University of Pittsburgh and M.Div. from the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary with a focus on urban ministry. They have been serving communities and congregations in various capacities for nearly 20 years, and have done extensive work locally and internationally to eradicate systemic oppression in the intersections of race, gender, sexual orientation, and socio-economic despair.

Sunday Services

**Celebration of the Lord's Supper*

Summer Worship | 10 am

Sept. 4* Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy

Journey Worship | 8:45 am

Theme: Gathering

Sept. 11 Rev. Heather Schoenewolf

Sept. 18 Rev. BJ Woodworth

Sept. 25 Rev. Shanea Leonard

Sanctuary Worship | 11 am

Sept. 11 Rev. Heather Schoenewolf

Sept. 18 Rev. BJ Woodworth

Sept. 25 Rev. Shanea Leonard

Taizé Prayer Service

Prayerful Song & Quiet Meditation

Wednesdays | 7 pm

Rev. BJ Woodworth

Get to Know ELPC at Our Church Life Extravaganza

On **Sun., Sept. 18**, our Membership & Outreach Committee is partnering with our Faith Formation Board to host a church-wide celebration combining elements of our annual Sampler and Picnic. Different ministries of our church will have information about how you can get involved in the life of our church; food trucks will provide lunch; music will play; church tours will be offered; there will be balloon art, face painting, and games for kids; and a dunk tank to raise money for our Church School offering.



Come and learn more about ELPC, greet friends—both old and new—and bring a friend to our welcoming family of faith.

East Liberty Presbyterian Church

info@coh.net | 412.441.3800

Staff Leadership

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The Rev. Heather Schoenewolf

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Pastoral Message

The Rev. Heather Schoenewolf, Associate Pastor for Educational Ministries



A friend suggested I set up a TikTok account. She assured me that there were inspirational people I could follow and no shortage of videos that would make me laugh. So I downloaded the app, started clicking through the boxes to set up an account...until I got stuck on a basic question: What should my name be?

It should be simple, right? It is my NAME after all. But let's face it: in different settings we go by different names. Names do more than help others pick us out from a crowd

of strangers. They say a lot about us: our relationships, identities, achievements, connections. They situate us in the world.

Simple things like matching names to faces has gotten trickier over the last few years. We've mostly seen only eyes and foreheads of those with whom we've shared indoor space at ELPC. As a congregation, it is even likely that we have seen more names printed at the bottom of a box on a Zoom screen since March 2020 than we have learned with a smile and a handshake. People we could once recognize by the smell of their perfume, sound of their shoes on the marble floor of the hallway, or the wave of their hair don't seem quite as familiar anymore.

This month will be the first time since 2019 that we will start off our Church School year with classes for persons of all ages, an open Nursery, and breakfast to share. We will see smiles and maybe even shake hands (or at least fist bump!); we'll notice how tall kids have grown and hear voices that were once familiar sing alongside us in worship again.

For many of us, this season of re-introduction to church and to one another will bring joy. For some (even for the joyful!), it might bring worry, apprehension, or a feeling of tenuous hope. COVID is not gone. We as a church remain in transition. And the circumstances of the world often cause us to fear.

Yet as I work with Sara and Megan to ensure that there are enough sticky nametags, attendance sheets, and registration forms for Rally Day, I am reminded of the words of the prophet Isaiah, spoken to God's people in a season of disorientation and dis-ease saying:

*"Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name, you are mine."—Isaiah 43:1b*

God reminds God's people that God knows them, has called them, and claimed them. Regardless of the societal and personal forces at play, God situates God's people with a spoken name that identifies them as God's own.

God's assurance is ours, too. As we gather together once more this September, reclaiming "old" traditions and starting some new practices, we are reminded that regardless of the events and challenges of the past year(s), we remain God's own. God has called US by name. God is with US. We are God's.

May we meditate on these promises as we check our name on a Church School attendance sheet, sign up for a mission work group during the Church Life Extravaganza, or print our name on a nametag for worship. As you share your name or learn the name of another, may we hear God's assurance echo to us, too: "Don't worry. I've got you. I have called YOU by name. YOU (individually and communally) are MINE."

Pastor Heather

Mission Matters

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



Keeping Our Trees Healthy

Join the Environmental Team (of the Justice Committee), Neighbors Committee, and Tree Pittsburgh on **Sat., Sept. 24**, 9–11:30 am, as we weed and mulch around the street trees in our East Liberty community.

It also will be a chance to learn more about the many benefits these trees bring—cooling, absorbing CO2 and storm water, filtering air pollution, and much more!

We will meet at ELPC. Water and snacks will be available, and Tree Pittsburgh will provide tools and mulch. Volunteers should dress for the elements and wear sun screen. And bring your love for God's creation!

Contact Mary Barr at empirephobic@gmail.com to sign up or ask questions.

How Can We Help Refugee Families?

Pittsburgh is still receiving refugee families. And AJAPO (Acculturation for Justice, Access, and Peace Outreach) assigned two new families to ELPC in July. Here's a brief review of how you can help:

- We have a small team of volunteers that help with obtaining and moving essential items like house goods and furniture. If you'd like to be part of this team, contact Eric Jester at eric@new-burgh.com.
- In May, ELPC held a furniture drive for "Angels in Overalls," the group that provides furniture for AJAPO's refugee families. Even though the turnover in furniture is frequent, we would like to help Sister Florence find a less expensive place to store and organize donated furniture than rented storage facilities. If you know of a small warehouse/facility that she could use, please contact Eric Jester with the details.
- AJAPO is looking for volunteers who are willing to meet with individuals or families and practice English through conversation. These are not formal classes. You'd meet in a central location or at their home, develop a relationship with them, and set how often you meet. If you're interested in volunteering, contact Eric for a volunteer application with AJAPO and send it to mhess@ajapopittsburgh.org.
- If you're interested in helping with more formalized English conversation classes held by Casa San José at ELPC, please contact Ruth Farrell at ruthfarrell@gmail.com for more details.



BUILDING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES OF HOPE

Meeting families from other countries and helping them make the transition to a new country and new culture has been a most amazing experience. It is so much more than welcoming the stranger. It is about making new friends. It is about being a neighbor. Your life will become richer, and you will begin to see the expanse and warmth of God's children in ways you never imagined.

Combating Our Climate Crisis with Action

For those who care about God's creation, the present time is one of crisis, and yet it is also a time of possibility. It is a time in which the persistent call of God is reaching out to us amid climate threats, burning forests, and flooding waters.

Fortunately, we are gifted with a rich theological tradition from those who have faced immense dangers and powerful forces in the past. The prophets of our faith have continually pointed to the need to act with all speed to meet the imperatives of justice.

Visit PresbyterianMission.org to learn more and stop by our display board near the Highland Ave. welcome desk to browse relevant and important actions you can take together with a family member or a friend.



Next Up: Mission Month

Please mark your calendars and plan to participate in our upcoming after-worship Mission Month in October.

We'll kick off Mission Month on **Sun., Oct. 2**, with the celebration of World Communion Sunday. On this day, we will celebrate the Lord's Supper with our siblings all over the world. And following our Sanctuary worship service, the Peace Committee, Board of Deacons, and Presbyterian Women will offer a time of sampling treats from other countries, as well as letter writing.

Other planned after-worship opportunities will be shared in the October newsletter.

For more information, please contact Pastor Patrice at PatriceFS@coh.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

Our children and youth are deeply spiritual people with great theological questions. To foster these gifts and to help students learn the stories, vocabulary, and actions of the Christian life in a loving community, ELPC offers Church School classes for kids and youth from pre-K–grade 12. Class locations are listed below.

- Pre-K | Nursery
- K–Grade 3 | Room 206
- Grades 4–6 | Room 211
- Grades 7–12 | Second Floor Parlor

Journey with Scripture | Fellowship Room

Facilitators: Lora Bethea and Jan Lyle Irvin

“This is the time of fulfillment. The reign of God is at hand! Change your hearts and minds, and believe the Good News!”—Mark 1:15

In our Journey with Scripture class, participants read and reflect upon three scriptures that span across the Bible. This year, we’ll read from Book 1 of the Psalms (Psalms 1–41) and from another Hebrew scripture. We also will read through the gospel of Mark. All these texts offer transformative paths to steadfast love, faithfulness, and justice. Come join the journey! You are welcome to join a class at any time—in person at church or online via Zoom. Contact Sara Hackett for Zoom info.

Sept. 11: Psalm 1; Mark 1:1–20

Sept. 18: Psalm 2; Reading from the Old Testament (TBD); Mark 1:21–45

Sept. 25: Psalm 3; Reading from the Old Testament (TBD); Mark 2:1–17

Parenting Circle | Room 213

Facilitator: Trish Buben

Sept. 11–25: Atlas of the Heart Discussion

This year, we will be reading *Atlas of the Heart: Mapping Meaningful Connection and the Language of Human Experience* by Brené Brown. In this *New York Times* bestseller, Brown writes, “If we want to find the way back to ourselves and one another, we need language and the grounded confidence to both tell our stories and be stewards of the stories that we hear. This is the framework for meaningful connection.”

Anyone involved in parenting (singles, couples, adoptive parents, step-parents, grandparents, guardians, mentors, etc.) are welcome to join us.

Seekers | Garth Overlook Room

Facilitator: Gwen Puza

Sept. 11: Why this Atheist Scientist Became a Believing Christian

As a biochemist, Dr. Sy Garte realized that science could not explain all of the “incredible complexities” of life. For most of his life, he was an unbelieving atheist. In this 30-minute video, he details his journey to becoming a scientist who is a believing Christian.

Sept. 18: Commitment to Peacemaking: Personal and Church Calling

In 1980, the Presbyterian Church declared a priority for peacemaking. Dr. Ron Stone wrote much of the resolution and called for the establishment of an offering and a program. Is that decision still relevant to us at ELPC?

We will be led by Dr. Ron Stone, an ELPC Elder. Dr. Stone taught social ethics at the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and the University of Pittsburgh from 1969–2005, retiring as the John Witherspoon Professor of Christian Ethics.

Sept. 25: Resistance to Militarism

Professors Dana Wilbanks and Ron Stone tried to deepen the peacemaking program by a church-wide study on resistance to militarism. In 1988, the General Assembly adopted the statement, “Christian Obedience in the Nuclear Age,” opposing nuclear deterrence and justifying Presbyterian resistance to militarism for members, but emphasizing obedient participation in a democratic country as the norm.

This class will be presented by Dr. Ron Stone.

Soul Food | Good Samaritan Room

Facilitators: Rev. Joe Hajdu and other class members

Sept. 11: Fellowship and Preview Session

Sept. 18: Meeting the Rev. Dr. Jacqui Lewis

The Rev. Dr. Jacqui Lewis, author of our next book, *Fierce Love*, will be speaking to us on Zoom. We also will begin discussing her book.

Sept. 25: Fierce Love Discussion

We will continue discussing our new book, *Fierce Love* by the Rev. Dr. Jacqui Lewis.

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

Children & Youth Ministry

Sara Hackett, Coordinator of Christian Education & Youth Ministry



Sun., Sept. 25: Pizza and Kickball @ PTS

Youth are invited to an afternoon of pizza and kickball at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary from 12:30–2:30 pm. We will be walking down Highland Ave. from ELPC to PTS following worship.

Contact Sara Hackett at SaraH@coh.net for more details or if you'd like to walk with us.

Registration is Open for Children and Youth

ELPC programming requires registration forms to be completed for every child and youth participating in our programs. Families can complete ONE form per CHILD that will be used for all ELPC programs—from Church School to **club one sixteen**.

You may complete the form online at tiny.cc/elpc-youth-programming, or fill out a paper copy at ELPC on Rally Day, Sun., Sept 11.

Young Adult Ministry

Derail Holcomb, Coordinator of Young Adult Ministries

Sun., Sept. 11: Rally Day Kickoff 9:45–10:45 am

All young adults are invited to gather in the Harambe Room to and catch up after summer. Bagels and coffee will be provided. Whether you stop by for a few minutes or for the whole hour, we would love to see you!

Sun., Sept. 18: Church Life Extravaganza 12:15 pm

YAMs will host a lemonade stand at our Church Life Extravaganza—sharing free lemonade with those who stop by and visiting with one another as we serve together. Stop by to learn about upcoming YAM events, greet friends, and meet our larger church family. If you are free to lend a hand at the lemonade stand, contact Derail at DerailH@coh.net.

Thurs., Sept. 29: Emory Community Senior Housing 5–7 pm

Our mission is to be in relationship with others, and explore their likes and dislikes, as we learn how to *welcome* others. Together, we'll provide ice cream and play bingo with our seniors. For more information and to RSVP, contact Derail at DerailH@coh.net.

club one sixteen

Beginning on **Wed., Sept. 14**, 4:30–6:30 pm, kids and youth in grades 1–12 are invited to participate in **club one sixteen**, ELPC's mid-week ministry. Each Wednesday, we'll gather together for Bible Study, recreation, crafts, and dinner.

LGBTQ Ministry

Wil Forrest, Coordinator of LGBTQ Ministry



Sun., Sept. 4: Spiritual Gathering 11:30 am

All allies and LGBTQIA+ folks alike are invited to our LGBTQ Ministry's next Spiritual Gathering following worship.

To ask questions or RSVP, contact Wil Forrest at Wil@coh.net or 412.441.3800 x218.

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

Family Church School

The Children and Family Ministry Team is creating opportunities for children and their parents to learn together during periodic Family Church School classes.

On **World Communion Sunday, Oct. 2**, 9:45–10:45 am (during the Church School hour), we will explore the Sacrament of The Lord's Supper together. Interactive stations will create the opportunity for kids and adults to learn more about a central practice of our faith and hold space for questions and discovery.

Contact Pastor Heather at HeatherS@coh.net for more details.

Practice Contemplative Prayer on Mondays

Beginning on **Mon., Sept. 12**, 7:30–8 am, you're invited to a weekly time of quiet contemplation and reflection. Pastor BJ will lead us through a variety of contemplative prayer practices utilizing fixed prayers, scripture, music, silence, art, and our bodies to help us start our day and week in communion with God and one another.

Join us online at tiny.cc/contemplative-prayer. Enter meeting ID **959 8065 3992** and passcode **bestill** if prompted.

Study the Enneagram

The Enneagram is an ancient tool with modern appeal. Its accuracy can be disarming and its applied wisdom transformative. Whether you are new to the Enneagram or have been dabbling in it for years, you are invited to participate in our Enneagram Study Group, where you will glean a deeper appreciation of how we are “fearfully and wonderfully made,” and how that plays out in loving our neighbors.

The Enneagram doesn't put you in a box; it reveals the box that you are already in—and offers a path out!

Join us on the third Monday of each month, 12:30–1:30 pm (September–December), at tiny.cc/enneagram. Enter meeting ID **966 6904 5127** and passcode **9types** if prompted.

Participants will need a copy of *The Sacred Enneagram: Finding Your Path to Spiritual Growth* by Christopher L. Heuertz.

Our group will be led by Lynn Holden, a licensed professional counselor, trained spiritual director, and certified Enneagram practitioner.

Presbyterian Women

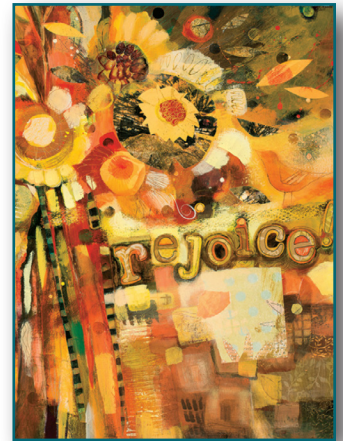
PW Bible Study: Celebrating Sabbath

Tues., Sept. 6 10 am–12 pm (Hybrid) | **Mon., Sept. 12** 7–8:30 pm (Zoom Only)

Sabbath is the Hebrew word for rest. This year's Bible study, Celebrating Sabbath, is an opportunity to embrace Sabbath as a way of marking time and to study what scripture says about Sabbath.

To all who are weary, Jesus as Lord of the Sabbath invites us to accept God's gift of rest and delight. Join us for our first lesson *Sabbath and Celebration*, Matthew 11:28–12:13. Those attending in person on Tuesday morning are invited to bring a bagged lunch and stay for fellowship after the lesson.

Shabbat Shalom! May you have a peaceful Sabbath. For more information and the Zoom link, email PW.ELPC@gmail.com.



Lessons and Practices of Revolutionary Love

What is **Revolutionary Love** you ask? According to Valarie Kaur, “revolutionary love is an orientation to the world and to the work of justice that is most successfully practiced in community. It is more than emotion or feeling. It is the ongoing choice to labor for others, opponents, and ourselves.”

The Spiritual Life Committee invites you to learn more about *Revolutionary Love* on **Thursdays, Sept. 15–Nov. 17**, 5:30–7 pm. A light meal will be provided.

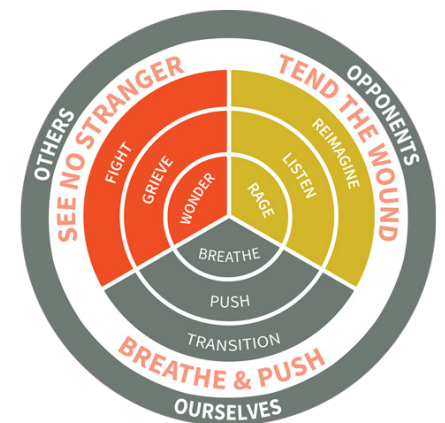
Drawing upon Kaur's book, *See No Stranger: A Memoir and Manifesto of Revolutionary Love*, we will discover together revolutionary love as a praxis for personal, spiritual, and political, transformation. We will **examine** stories, theories, and practices from writers, scholars, activists, and practitioners whose work has informed the framework of revolutionary love. We will **connect** these to historical contexts and contemporary social issues and concerns. We will **engage** in personal spiritual practices to challenge power inequalities, dismantle unjust institutions, and create a world that honors the humanity of us all. And each week, will **practice** communal learning, personal and silent reflection, and invitations to action.

The outline of her spiritual practice paradigm can be seen in the compass on the right, with a focus on loving others, opponents and ourselves. We will explore one of these each week. There are corresponding:

It is recommended that you begin reading her book before we start. Limited copies are available. Contact Pastor BJ at BJW@coh.net for more information.



Scan the QR code to view Valarie Kaur's TED Talk to get a sense of the arch and aim of our time together.



Updates from the ELPC IPNC

The Interim Pastor Nominating Committee (IPNC) submitted our Ministry Information Form (MIF) to the Pittsburgh Presbytery in late July, after Session approval. In early August, the Pittsburgh Presbytery posted our MIF on Church Leadership Connections' website for potential interim pastors to access.

We have received 11 Pastor Information Forms, and we're reviewing them as they are submitted. During a September worship service, the IPNC will provide the congregation with an update on our progress.

We continue to ask for your support by:

- Praying for Pastors Heather and Patrice as they lead us during this time ahead of an interim pastor.
- Praying for our congregation that God will prepare us for our interim pastor.
- Praying for the IPNC for God's discernment as we continue to move through this process.
- Praying for the candidates and their families as they discern God's call to apply for our interim pastor position.

Thank you,

—IPNC

Chapel Market is Open for Business



The Chapel Market is ELPC's free clothing ministry located near the Whitfield St. entrance. It is currently open for customers on Thursdays, 10 am–12 pm. Customers register and are invited to visit the Chapel Market twice a month. There are restrictions on the number of items per person, so that we have enough clothes to serve many.

Each week since the Chapel Market re-opened in June, we have experienced a growth in the number of folks stopping by to shop. One recent Thursday, we had more than 20 customers and half of them were first-time shoppers.

Would you like to support our ministry? You can **donate** clothes, **volunteer** to help shoppers during open hours, or help **sort** clothing on Tuesday mornings.

If you have *gently* worn, clean clothes that are appropriate for fall and winter to donate, please drop them in the bins at the Highland Ave. entrance. We are in need of the following items:

- Tennis shoes (children and adult sizes)
- Boys clothing (sizes 10–12)
- Men's white crew socks, t-shirts, and underwear
- Back to school clothing (children and young adults)
- Personal deodorant (small sizes)

For more details, contact Linda and Harold Diess at deisshl@consolidated.net or Pastor Patrice at **412.441.3800**.

Session News

At its recent called meeting, the ELPC Session:

- Prayerfully discussed how to ensure that our 2023 Budget most faithfully reflects our church's mission and call as we anticipate the fall budgeting and stewardship season together.
- Approved an 8% Cost of Living Adjustment for staff. The ELPC minimum wage was increased to \$15.00/hour. Pastors Heather and Patrice will receive increases on their base salaries after our interim pastor is secured and a congregational meeting is called.
- Revised the ELPC masking policy (see [ELPC.church](#) for the most current information).
- Extended the Monday building closure until August 2023. The topic will be revisited in April.

ELPC People

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

Good News

- Join us in celebrating the accomplishments of:
 - **TJ Benedict**, who graduated summa cum laude from Washington and Lee University School of Law; and
 - **Lynne Irvin** who graduated from Columbia University with a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Studies.

Prayers

We offer our prayers and condolences to the family and friends of Margot Feldstein, who recently passed away.

“...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 Updates

- ELPC will be closed on Labor Day, **Mon., Sept. 5.**
- For the most up-to-date information about ministries, pandemic protocols, and building hours, please visit ELPC.church.

Memorial to the Lost

ELPC is joining other local congregations—including Eastminster Presbyterian, Calvary Episcopal, and Valley View Presbyterian—to host a Memorial to the Lost on **Sat., Sept. 10**, 10 am–12 pm. Join us as we respond to God’s call to end gun violence, trauma, and despair by honoring victims of gun violence and their families.

The prayer walk will begin at Valley View Presbyterian (601 N. Aiken Ave.) and end at Calvary Episcopal Church (315 Shade Ave.).

Hope Academy’s Dates to Know

HOPE
ACADEMY
OF MUSIC AND THE ARTS

Hope Academy’s Dance, Theater, and Music classes, as well as Private Lessons are scheduled to begin on **Sat., Sept. 17**. Registration is open at HopeAcademyArts.com.

There also will be an Open Dance class (try it out!) and placement for dance students who are 5–8 years old on **Sat., Sept. 10**, 10 am.

And plan on joining us at the Karl Sellner Memorial Benefit for Hope Academy at The Sly Fox Brewing Company on **Mon., Sept. 11**. There will be music, food, refreshments, and an auction in memory of former student, Karl Sellner.

Tuning Up for the 2022–2023 Cathedral Concerts Season

ELPC’s Cathedral Concerts series will kick off its 2022–2023 season on **Sun., Nov. 20**, 3 pm, with an exciting concert featuring guest conductor Dr. Anthony Leach, the ELPC Chancel Choir, and special guests. The program will feature music by living Black composers.



Anyone interested in singing with the choir for this concert is invited to attend an introductory rehearsal with Dr. Leach on **Sat., Sept. 17**, 10 am–1 pm, to start working on the music for the concert. Please contact Dr. Ed Moore at EdM@coh.net for details.

 CATHEDRAL
Concerts
EAST LIBERTY
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