

It's Mission Month

Sun., Oct. 2: World Communion Sunday

On this day, we'll receive the Peace & Global Witness Offering during worship. Your support helps cast off anxiety and fear, and embraces God's mission of reconciliation to those around the corner and around the world.

You're also invited to participate in the Presbyterian Women Offering of Letters

in support of the Global Food Security Reauthorization Act. And the ELPC Board of Deacons will host a sampling of "International Sweets and Treats." Both events will be held in the McKelvy Room. See page 6 for details.

Wed., Oct. 5, and Sun., Oct. 9: Voter Registration Events

The ELPC Justice and Facing Systemic Racism Committees are collaborating with the League of Women Voters and Interfaith Power and Light to host three voter registration events. See page 3 for details.

Sun., Oct. 16: Full Inclusion Sunday

The Renaissance City Choir (RCC) will be with us to provide special music during Sanctuary worship. There also will be a Community Sing event in the Social Hall at 1:30 pm. See page 8 for details.

Sun., Oct. 23: Bring a Coat to Worship Sunday

Clean, gently used and new coats for all-ages and genders will be collected and distributed through the Chapel Market and East End Cooperative Ministry. This event is sponsored by the Neighbors Committee.

Sun., Oct. 30: Reckoning with Race: The History & Persistence of White Supremacy in the Church

The Facing Systemic Racism Committee invites you to a new series that's designed to provide a big picture overview of how Christianity invented, codified, perpetuated, and benefited from white supremacy. We will consider not only how we continue to be implicated in this history, but also how we can lament, respond to, and develop reparations for this injustice.

The presenter for each installment will be Dr. Brock Bahler, who serves as senior lecturer and director of undergraduate studies, Department of Religious Studies at the University of Pittsburgh. Dr. Bahler is a member of and ruling elder at Open Door Presbyterian Church in Garfield.

The program will consist of a lecture and small group discussion. We'll meet in the Social Hall and on Zoom during the Church School hour, 9:45 am. For details, email Michele Bossers at michele2285@gmail.com.

Sunday Services

*Celebration of the Lord's Supper

Journey Worship | 8:45 am

Theme: Set in Motion

Oct. 2* Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy

Oct. 9 Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy

Oct. 16 Rev. Heather Schoenewolf

Oct. 23 Rev. Heather Schoenewolf

Oct. 30 Rev. Gavin Walton

Sanctuary Worship | 11 am

Oct. 2* Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy

Oct. 9 Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy

Oct. 16 Rev. Heather Schoenewolf

Oct. 23 Rev. Heather Schoenewolf

Oct. 30 Rev. Gavin Walton

Taizé Prayer Service

Prayerful Song & Quiet Meditation

Wednesdays | 7 pm Rev. BJ Woodworth

Welcoming the Rev. Gavin Walton

We are pleased to welcome the Rev. Gavin Walton as our guest preacher at Journey and Sanctuary worship on **Sun., Oct. 30**.



A native of Pittsburgh, the Rev. Walton currently serves as pastor at Grace Memorial Presbyterian Church. He is a graduate of

Duquesne University and Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

East Liberty Presbyterian Church

info@coh.net | 412.441.3800

Staff Leadership

The Rev. Patrice L. Fowler-Searcy
Associate Pastor for Mission Ministries
PatriceFS@coh.net | x230

The Rev. Heather Schoenewolf
Associate Pastor for Educational Ministries
HeatherS@coh.net | x221

The Rev. BJ Woodworth

Director of Spiritual Life Ministries
and Minister of Taizé Prayer

BJW@coh.net | x241

Linda Addlespurger

Director of Hope Academy info@HopeAcademyArts.com | x212

Wil Forrest

Director of Church Operations, Coordinator of LGBTQ Ministry Wil@coh.net | x218

Sara Hackett

Coordinator of Christian Education and Youth Ministries SaraH@coh.net | x220

Derail Holcomb

Coordinator of Young Adult Ministry
DerailH@coh.net | x233

Dr. Edward Alan Moore

Music Director and Organist EdM@coh.net | x224

Rachelle Calfee

RachelleC@coh.net | x234

Megan Leisher

MeganL@coh.net | x222

Norma Meyer

Norma@coh.net | x211

Venetia Singletary

VenetiaS@coh.net | x216



Pastoral Message

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



I hope that each of you had an opportunity to participate in Rally Day last month. It was an exciting day in the life of our congregation—Journey Worship resumed with Gerald Savage as our new Journey Music Director; after a several-year hiatus due to Covid, breakfast was served; Church School classes were well attended; and both worship services were spirit-filled! The following Sunday, at the "new" Church Life Extravaganza, members took to the streets, came together as a church and community for food, fun, fellowship, and to share ministry information. It seems that church, as we knew it pre-Covid, had returned!

You might say that everything old was new again. And yet, I suspect that as church life returns to some semblance of normal, things may not ever be exactly the same.

Traditionally, October is Mission Month at ELPC. A time to lift up the work of the Mission Board and mission committees, highlighting the ministries our congregation supports in worship and after-worship offerings. Much like the designations of African American, Indigenous Peoples, Asian American Pacific Islander, Latinx heritage months in the secular world, the designation of Mission Month is anemic at best, because the contributions of BiPOC and our mission ministries transcend and extend well beyond 30 days or less of acknowledgement. Every month is *mission month* in the life of a worshiping community. As followers of Christ, our call is to be in relationship and to daily walk with, support, and love neighbors as we love ourselves.

ELPC members who serve on the Mission Board, mission committees, Board of Deacons, Faith Formation Board, other committees, and Presbyterian Women—as well as ELPC members who volunteer and staff who facilitate and serve local communities—are living out and walking in our Christian call. And our dedicated and committed service ensures that those whom Jesus called "the least of these" are clothed, nurtured, fed, accepted, have just shelter, and are shown love through the ministries of The Chapel Market; **Club one sixteen**; Hope Academy; Open Hand Ministries; East Liberty Development, Inc.; Garfield Community Farm; East End Cooperative Ministry; the East Liberty Family Support Center; Kingsley Center Association; 412 Food Rescue; refugee settlement; Casa San José; and many other organizations too numerous to name. And there is room for growth and even more room and opportunities for more members to serve.

As a Presbyterian Church (USA) Matthew 25 Congregation, we are committed to dismantling structural racism, eradicating systemic poverty, and building a vital or relevant congregation. These are heavy tasks and responsibilities that cannot be accomplished by just a few people. Fully living into our call and commitments is the responsibility and work of Session, every church board, committee, ministry team, task force, and quite frankly, every individual ELPC member. We *ALL* have a part to play.

In this season of returning to more traditional ways of being the church, let's not return to doing things the way we always have. "New normal" is oxymoronic and is not the order of the day! Let's shake things up, decern new and transformative ways to be the church, and dare with Holy boldness to be abnormal in newness.

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Mission Matters

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

Are You Ready to Vote?

In partnership with the League of Women Voters, the ELPC Justice and Facing Systemic Racism Committees are sponsoring three opportunities for citizens to:



- Register as new voter;
- Assure registration is still active;
- Double check polling location;
- Make changes to current voting status (name, address, affiliation);
- Obtain website info to apply for electronic voting, etc.; and
- Develop voting plan.

These opportunities are open to the public and will follow our Taizé prayer service on **Wed., Oct. 5**, and both services on **Sun., Oct. 9**. Join us in the Whitfield Lounge after Journey worship, or along Penn Ave. following Sanctaury worship.

Updates from the ELPC IPNC

In May 2022, ELPC members were nominated to form the Interim Pastor Nominating Committee (IPNC). They include: Hollen Barmer, Damon Bethea, Douglas Cooper, Becky Gloninger, Polly Mattila (chairperson), Andrew Simpson, and Cami Teacoach. Our first meeting was led by the Rev. Brian Wallace (Presbytery Staff) and the Rev. Dr. Vincent Kolb (Committee on Ministry Transition Liaison) with the purpose of orienting the IPNC to the interim pastor search process.

Our work started by describing ELPC to potential candidates using the Ministry Information Form (MIF) from PC(USA). After completing the MIF, we presented it to Session in July for approval and it was posted on PC(USA).org. Potential candidates were either matched based on their Personal Information Form (PIF) or were self-nominated. Top candidates were chosen based on prayer, thoughtful reading and discussion of their PIFs, and viewing of their sermons. At this time, we have narrowed the search to four potential candidates, with the intention of inviting no more than three pastors for an in-person interview.

We have approached selecting an interim pastor with humility and openness to guidance from the Holy Spirit. The IPNC is blessed to be filled with members who come with diverse backgrounds and input, but who also come with respect, thoughtfulness, and the best intentions when we meet. We ask for your prayers and patience during this search.

Thank you,

—IPNC

Environmental Team Picks New Book

The Environmental Team of the Justice Committee is reading *Blue Revolution: Unmaking America's Water Crisis* by Cynthia Barnett.

Americans see water as abundant and cheap: we turn on the faucet and out it gushes. We use more water than any other culture in the world, much to quench what's now our largest crop—the lawn. Yet most Americans cannot name the river or aquifer that flows to our taps, irrigates our food, and produces our electricity. And most don't realize these freshwater sources are in deep trouble.

Reporting from across the country and around the globe, Barnett shows how people, businesses, and governments have come together to dramatically reduce water use and reverse the water crisis. She recommends a water ethic, meaning that we must live within our water means.

Join us in reading the book, and then plan on gathering on **Thurs.**, **Nov. 17**, 7 pm, for a discussion on Zoom (and possibly in person.

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



Christian Education

The Rev. Heather Schoenewolf, Associate Pastor for Educational Ministries

Children and Youth

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

"Answer me when I call, O God of my right! You gave me room when I was in distress. Be gracious to me, and hear my prayer."—Psalm 4:1

This year, we're reading from Book 1 of the Psalms (Psalms 1–41), select Hebrew Scriptures referencing "A Women's Lectionary for the Whole Church" by Wilda Gafney, and the gospel of Mark. All these texts offer transformative paths to steadfast love, faithfulness, and justice. Join the journey!

Oct. 2: Psalm 4; 2 Samuel 13:1–16,21–22; Mark 2:18–3:6

Oct. 9: Psalm 5; 2 Samuel 20:1-3,14-22; Mark 3:7-19a

Oct. 16: Psalm 6; 2 Samuel 21:1–14; Mark 3:19b–35

Oct. 23: Psalm 7; 1 Kings 1:1–5,11–18, 29–31; Mark 4:1–20

Parenting Circle | Room 213

Facilitator: Trish Buben

October: Atlas of the Heart Discussion

This year, we're 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 is welcome to join us.

Soul Food | Good Samaritan Room

Facilitators: Rev. Joe Hajdu and other class members

October: Discussing Fierce Love

This month, we will continue discussing *Fierce Love* by the Rev. Dr. Jacqui Lewis.

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

Seekers | Garth Overlook Room

Facilitator: Gwen Puza | gpuza9@gmail.com

Oct. 2: Feed the Future: Global Nutrition & Agricultural Development

Established in 2010, Feed the Future works with local partners in some of the world's poorest countries to increase agricultural productivity so farmers can more effectively feed their families—and have some left over to take to market. This focus helps spur economic growth and increase income (reduce poverty), while reducing hunger and malnutrition.

Note: Classes meet on Sundays, 9:45am.

We will be led by Cheri Andes, who serves as the Northeast Regional Organizer for Bread for the World.

Oct. 9: A Just Food System

The U.S. Farm Bill has tremendous influence on efforts to end hunger at home and abroad. As much as 75% of the funding in the Farm Bill is spent on nutrition programs—primarily the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the largest federal nutrition program. Other parts of the Farm Bill address distribution of nutritious foods, incentives for households to purchase more fruits and vegetables, and research to develop solutions to mitigate climate change impacts.

Bread for the World's Just Food System priorities for the omnibus Farm Bill address:

- Equity | Ending discrimination in accessing SNAP and supporting self-governance and food sovereignty on Tribal Nations
- **Nutrition** | Access to fresh fruits and vegetables, especially in vulnerable communities of color
- Climate | Incentives to promote food recovery/donation

We will be led by Joyce Rothermehl, coordinator of the Southwest Pennsylvania Chapter of Bread for the World.

Oct. 16: Religion, Violence, and Terrorism

Dr. Ron Stone will discuss the message on terrorism, *Church and Society*, by the General Assembly of the PC(USA). The message considers the terrorists in Lebanon, the new wars with terrorists, and drone killings. Does religion encourage terrorism?

An ELPC Elder, Dr. Stone taught social ethics at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and the University of Pittsburgh from 1969–2005, retiring as the John Witherspoon Professor of Christian Ethics.

Oct. 23: Current Policy of our Church on the Risks of Peacemaking for Presbyterians

Dr. Ron Stone will discuss the peacemaking verture from East liberty Presbyterian Church which resulted in the new policies in Five Risks Presbyterians Must Take for Peace and questions of personal response to peacemaking.



Family Church School Classes

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

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, engaging stations will create the opportunity for kids and adults of all ages to learn more about a central practice of our faith and hold space for questions and discovery together.

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

Children & Youth Ministry

Sara Hackett, Coordinator of Christian Education & Youth Ministry

Sun., Oct. 2: Tween Mini Golf 4–6 pm

Youth in grades 4–6 will play mini golf around the church. Help design the course, eat some pizza, and then swing away. You might even get a hole-in-one in the church tower! Contact Sara Hackett at **SaraH@coh.net** for more details.



Sun., Oct. 16: Not all Who Wander are Lost Following worship, youth in grades 6–12 are heading to Howling Hills Corn Maze in Allenport, Pennsylvania. The eight-acre maze also features a hayride.

The cost is \$20 to cover the maze and lunch. We will return to ELPC at 5:30 pm.

Sun., Oct. 30: Let's Talk About Mental Health 12:15 pm

Youth, parents, and caregivers are invited to join us after Sanctuary worship for lunch and a program on talking together about mental health. The presentation will be led Carol Dundes, a counselor at Samaritan Counseling.

Young Adult Ministry

Derail Holcomb, Coordinator of Young Adult Ministries



Fri., Oct. 21: YAM Virtual Event 6–8 pm Hey, Yinzers! Let's get together via Zoom. Each month, we'll gather virtually for discussion. This month, Isaac from the (Environmental Team of the Justice Committee) will speak on the importance of environmental justice and how we can be better stewards of God's creation (Earth). We invite others from our church and community to participate in our BYOB Friday virtual event, so invite a friend!

Don't hesitate to email Derail Holcomb at **DerailH@coh.net** with questions.

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 <u>tiny.cc/elpc-youth-programming</u>.



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 together.

This month, our theme is Who? What? Why? Where? When? How? Join us as we explore questions of God, life, and community.



PW Hosts Offering of Letters on October 2

Presbyterian Women is hosting an Offering of Letters in support of the Global Food Security Reauthorization Act of 2022 following Sanctuary worship on **World Communion Sunday, Oct. 2**, in the McKelvy Room.

First introduced in 2008, the Act provides the U.S. government with a comprehensive strategy to fight hunger and malnutrition, promote nutrition among pregnant women and young children, build stronger agricultural infrastructures, and prioritize women smallholder farmers.



The Act has been at work through a program called Feed the Future. Working with local partners in some of the world's poorest countries, Feed the Future has helped:

- Prevent 3.4 million children from stunting and malnutrition,
- Brought 5.2 million families out of hunger, and
- Lifted 23.4 million people out of poverty globally.

Our Offering of Letters will urge our senators and representatives to support the Global Food Security Reauthorization Act to fund Feed the Future through 2028.

Presbyterian Women will be available after worship to provide assistance.

Presbyterian Women

PW Bible Study: Celebrating Sabbath Mon., Oct. 3 7–8:30 pm (Zoom only)
Tues., Oct. 4 10 am–12 pm (Zoom only)
Sabbath, "the crown of creation," is God's invitation to intimate friendship with God. Sabbath celebration is the culmination of God's exquisite work of creation (Genesis 1:1–2:3). Admission to this celebration is free, but we must check our work at the door.

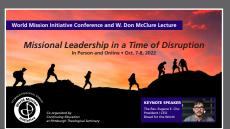
For more information and the Zoom link, email **PW.ELPC@gmail.com**.



Missional Leadership in a Time of Disruption: World Mission Initiative Conference

What does it mean to engage in God's mission of love, peace, and justice through the major disruptions of our day? How can we lead in mission in new ways amidst such disruption?

Join us Fri.–Sat., Oct. 7–8, in person or online, as we explore these questions in lectures, workshops and plenary. The Rev Eugene E. Cho, president/CEO of Bread for the World, will be the keynote speaker on Friday evening.



The conference is free, thanks to sponsors, including Presbyterian Women

in ELPC. Registration is required. For details, visit pts.edu/wmi-conference.

LGBTQ Ministry

Wil Forrest, Coordinator of LGBTQ Ministry

Sun., Oct. 16: Spiritual Gathering *12 pm* All allies and LGBTQIA+ folks alike are invited to our Spiritual Gathering following worship to celebrate Full Inclusion Sunday and enjoy an interactive lunch with friends. And plan to join us for Community Sing with the Renaissance City Choir at 1:30 pm (see page 8).

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



God Created You. God Loves You. Be Yourself.

Spiritual Life

The Rev. BJ Woodworth, Director of Spiritual Life Ministries

Sat., Oct. 15: Fall Forest Bathing 9 am-12 pm

Join us at Frick Park for a time of Fall Solstice Forest Bathing and mark the start of the season. Sandi Miller will lead us as we attend to the beauty of nature, the colors of leaves, slowing down, harvest, and preparing for wintering.

Enjoy three hours of walking, sitting, and noticing. You will experience a series of guided invitations to slow down, open the senses, and cultivate an embodied relationship between yourself and the natural world. Throughout the walk, you will have an opportunity to share your experiences. We will be walking less than one mile, but there are some hills involved.

RSVP to Norma Meyer at **412.441.3800 x211** by **Wed., Oct. 12**. Spots are limited. We'll meet at Frick Park's lower parking lot.

Experience a Sabbath Retreat

There is a kind of hurry that is a form of violence exercised upon time that is detrimental to our health, our families, our communities, and our relationship with God. Admittedly, there are times when the demands of relationships, family, work, school, church, childcare, shopping, health, appearance, housework, meals, bill payments, commuting, accidents, interruptions, illness, and countless other things eat up more time than is seemingly available. Living under pressure is a part of life. Still, we have to be careful not to rationalize. God didn't make a mistake in creating time; God made enough of it.

When we cannot find enough time and—as the psalmist says—find ourselves getting up earlier and going to bed later because we have too much to do, we can see this as a sign to make some changes in our lives. When we allow ourselves to be driven like this for too long, we end up doing violence to time, to ourselves, and to our blood pressure! What's the answer?

There is no simple answer, but there is a divinely given counsel regarding how we can protect ourselves from becoming addicted to pressure and rushing headlong through our lives. It's more than counsel to lower blood pressure; it's one of the Ten Commandments: Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day. God gave us the Sabbath. Jesus taught us that we weren't made for the sabbath but that sabbath was made for us. Sabbath time is our time, our chance to rest, to worship God..., to taste a wee bit of heaven, and to be more in sympathy with all that is, not least our own lives.

—Ronald Rolheiser, (Embracing Rhythms of Work and Rest, by Ruth Haley Barton, pages ix-xi)



If these words tap into your own experience and desire, join us for a Sabbath Retreat, Fri.—Sun., Oct. 21–23, at St. Emma's Retreat House in Greensburg. The retreat will include times of prayer, rest, solitude, silence, table fellowship, teaching, and reflection. The cost is \$150 (scholarships are available). RSVP to Pastor BJ by Sun., Oct. 16. Spots are limited.

Session News

At its recent called meeting, the ELPC Session:

- Voted to approve new job descriptions to fill staff vacancies.
- Began a discussion around church mission and the upcoming budgeting process.

ELPC People

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

Good News

- Congratulations to Adam and Ali Clevenger on the baptism of their daughters, **Sienna** and **Kaley**.
- Congratulations to Kathryn Ophardt, our former intern, who has accepted her first call as a member of the pastoral team for the Muskingum Valley Partnership! She will be serving three churches in Ohio as the pastor for worship, pastoral care, and spiritual formation. Kathryn will be ordained on Sun., Oct. 9, 4 pm, at Christ Presbyterian Church in Canton, Ohio.

"I am so grateful to the ELPC congregation for how you all inspired me and helped me discern my call in ministry. Your community continues to be in my prayers."

Peace and love,

—Kathryn Ophardt

Prayers

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

- Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy's brother Chris Fowler
- Diane Reckless' husband Mark Hrehocik
- Bob Washburn's wife Joanne Wasbhurn







116 South Highland Avenue Pittsburgh, PA 15206







Search: EastLibertyPresbyterian

"As a diverse community of believers, we strive to follow God—the Creator who calls us, lesus 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."

Building Updates

ELPC staff will not be working on Indigenous People's Day, Mon., Oct. 10.

Join us for a Community **Sing for Social Justice**

Experience the joy of choral singing as we join our voices together for social justice on Sun., Oct. 16, 1:30-2:30 pm! The Renaissance City Choir (RCC), as well as ELPC's LGBTQ Ministry and Justice Committee invite singers of all ages and skill levels to attend this community sing event in the Social Hall.



Guided by Kym Scott, RCC artistic director, attendees will learn and sing simple—yet powerful—choral pieces with a focus on social justice, along with some familiar justice songs.

Masks are required regardless of vaccination status.

RCC affirms and celebrates LGBTOIA+ identity through the unifying power of music, and rehearses and performs at ELPC as artists-in-residence.

Please contact president@rccpittsburgh.com with questions, or accessibility@rccpittsburgh.com with any access concerns.

Get Ready for Stewardship Sunday, November 13

Gather with us on **Stewardship Sunday, Nov. 13**, as we enjoy together the joyful bustle of our annual Food Drive for East End Cooperative Ministry. Celebrate generosity and abundance as we return our pledges for the ongoing ministry of ELPC. Watch your mailboxes and social media for details.

For many, autumn is a season of reflecting and winding down at the same time as new beginnings ramp up, and new friends and opportunities are discovered.

So is stewardship season—a time to reflect and soak up the joy of our active church community, while also revving up to reach new goals and possibilities.

Enjoy this time of transitions and join the in-worship celebrations on Sun., Nov. 13.

