

## The History and Persistence of Racism Within the Christian Church

The Facing Systemic Racism Committee invites the congregation to join us on **Sun., Jan. 29**, via zoom or in person, for the second part of our series, *The History and Persistence of Racism within the Christian Church*, led by University of Pittsburgh professor and lecturer, Dr. Brock Bahler.

Comments following the first presentation included:

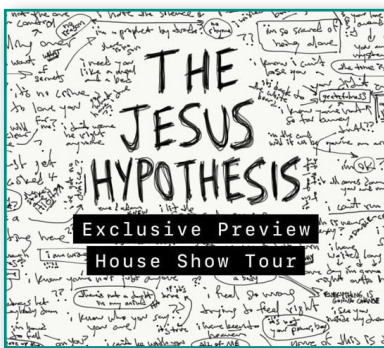
- I've been Christian all my life. Why didn't I know this history?
- What else don't I know about my faith in general as well as the Presbyterian denomination?
- How is ELPC implicated in that history? What now?



Dr. Bahler will speak to the intentional codification of racism within the church and how the church continues to perpetuate—and benefits from—white supremacy. His lecture will be followed by a small group discussion of the content, as well as consideration of next steps for ELPC.

The presentation will be held during the Church School hour, immediately following Journey worship in the Social Hall. Zoom details to follow in January.

## See Derek Webb in Concert



All are invited to join the Young Adult Ministry on **Fri., Feb. 10**, 8 pm, for Derek Webb in concert in the ELPC Bowling Alley.

A member of contemporary Christian band Caedmon's Call, Derek's newest solo work, *The Jesus Hypothesis*, takes another look at doubt and faith in beautiful ways. Tickets can be purchased online at [DerekWebb.com](http://DerekWebb.com).

## Sunday Services

*\*Celebration of the Lord's Supper*

### Journey Worship | 8:45 am

Theme: Restart

- Jan. 1 No Service
- Jan. 8\* Rev. Heather Schoenewolf
- Jan. 15 Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy
- Jan. 22 Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy
- Jan. 29 Rev. BJ Woodworth

### Sanctuary Worship | 11 am

- Jan. 1 Rev. Heather Schoenewolf
- Jan. 8\* Rev. Heather Schoenewolf
- Jan. 15 Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy
- Jan. 22 Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy
- Jan. 29 Rev. BJ Woodworth

## Taizé Prayer Service

### Prayerful Song & Quiet Meditation

Wednesdays | 7 pm

Rev. BJ Woodworth

## Photos from 2022

While you're reading through this issue of Reaching Out, take a look at some photos of our church family from the past year.



## East Liberty Presbyterian Church

info@coh.net | 412.441.3800

### Staff Leadership

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# Pastoral Message

*The Rev. Heather Schoenewolf, Associate Pastor for Educational Ministries*



“What’s new?” We sometimes greet someone we haven’t seen in awhile with this greeting, an open invitation to catch up on life’s details that have marked the passing of recent time. “What’s new?” is also a statement of hope—hope that life is filled with fresh starts and new possibilities, and that even when the headlines of one’s story are filled with struggle or loss, there will be new news, hopefully better news, soon.

As 2023 begins, I can’t help but wonder, “What’s new?”

What’s new with you? What’s new with your family? What’s new in your community? What’s something new for which you hope? What’s something new you are working towards? What’s something new you’ve learned?

And I can’t help but wonder as we begin a new year, what’s new with God.

I know it sounds funny. Rest assured, I don’t envision God opening a new 2023 bullet journal and establishing priorities for divine intervention across the world. I don’t envision God resolving to exercise more or listen better or ending more wars (though if more wars ended, I would certainly rejoice).

But I do believe that God IS a God of new life—who engages each new moment with holy creativity, redemptive possibility and transformational love. And I wonder what new thing God is up to in our world, our church, and our lives.

We are in the midst of a liturgical season that celebrates the new life God offers in Christ. The Biblical arc of God putting on flesh and dwelling among us sets us up with story after story of human role models who notice God’s new initiative among humanity because of their own enacted curiosity. They did not fix their gaze on what has always been, but were open minded and open hearted enough to see that God was up to something new and to trust that they would be blessed by God’s new thing.

My prayer as we approach the start of a new year, we will approach God in a posture of Sacred Curiosity, where we—as individuals and as a community—might dare to wonder what God is up to in our lives, our church and our world. I wonder what we might learn in this season of transition. I wonder how we might grow together. I wonder what work God is equipping us to do together—what need God is calling us to address. I wonder how we might love others and love God in new expressions.

May 2023 be filled with Sacred Curiosity and a keen awareness that God is with US too. May we be filled with hope and wonder and love as we ask God, “What’s new?” together.

*Rev. Heather Schoenewolf*

# Mission Matters

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

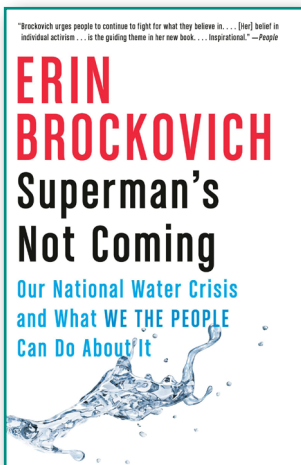
## How to Reduce Energy Bills and Take Advantage of New Incentives

Energy prices have gone up sharply within the last half year, and are impacting many households this winter. At the same time, legislators and the Biden Administration are to release \$369 billion for “Energy Security and Climate Change,” part of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), offering rebates, tax incentives, and other programs to help households conserve energy and to electrify.

What is in the programs and how can you take advantage of them? Join the Environmental Team of Justice Committee following worship on **Sun., Jan. 22**, in the Social Hall or on Zoom to learn about the actions we can take right away or plan to take later in 2023, when the remaining regulations are finalized.

Overall, 42% of our energy-related emissions stem from decisions we make around our kitchen tables: what kind of transportation we use, how we heat the air and water in our homes, cook our food, and dry our clothes. The only way to remove these emissions is to have our homes run on machines with plugs, not pipes. Taking these steps is important for the planet to reduce global warming and our long-term energy costs. **IRA has been called the single largest climate investment in American history.** Come hear how you can be a part of this change.

A light lunch will be offered. Email Nancy Heastings at [n.heastings@comcast.net](mailto:n.heastings@comcast.net) with any questions.



## Environmental Book Study: Superman's Not Coming

The Environmental Team of the Justice Committee is continuing their study surrounding water with their next book, *Superman's Not Coming: Our National Water Crisis and What We the People Can Do About It* by Erin Brockovich.

This 2020 book is a stirring call to action from the environmental activist, consumer advocate, and renowned crusader. It is a brutally honest look at how mismanagement, chemical spills, mishandling of toxic waste and sludge have created the perfect storm in terms of damaging water systems in the United States.

In an NPR interview, the following review was given: “An impeccably researched book that brings science, court cases, depositions, interviews, history, and personal experience to the table to make strong points about the dire state of many of our water systems—and the consequences of it. Brockovich shows how things like suppression of research, intimidation of scientists, manipulated studies, and false scientific articles contribute to perpetuating the problem, and then she discusses what can be done about it.”

Consider reading our new book and plan on joining us for a discussion on **Thurs., Feb. 9**, 7 pm, led by Sandy Brake on Zoom. For more information and the Zoom link, contact Nancy Heastings at [n.heastings@comcast.net](mailto:n.heastings@comcast.net).

# Christian Education

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

*The Rev. Heather Schoenewolf, Associate Pastor for Educational Ministries*

## Winter Rally Day

There will be no Church School classes on **Sun., Jan. 1**.  
Classes will resume on **Winter Rally Day, Sun., Jan. 8**.

### 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*

*“Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before the people.”—Mark 6:41*

In the Journey with Scripture class, participants read and reflect upon three scriptures that span across the Bible. This month, we continue reading from the Psalms, the Song of Songs, and the Gospel of Mark. All these texts offer transformative paths to steadfast love, faithfulness, and justice. We reflect on the abundant Christian life of being taken, blessed, broken, and given for the world. Come join the journey! You are welcome to join at any time, in person or via Zoom. Contact Sara Hackett for Zoom info.

**Jan. 8:** Psalm 14; Song of Songs 3:1–11; Mark 6:30–44

**Jan. 15:** Psalm 15; Song of Songs 4:1–8; Mark 6:45–56

**Jan. 22:** Psalm 16; Song of Songs 4:9–5:1; Mark 7:1–23

### Parenting Circle | Room 213

*Facilitator: Trish Buben*

#### January: 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.

### Seekers | Garth Overlook Room

*Facilitator: Gwen Puza | gpuza9@gmail.com*

#### Jan. 8: That They May All Be One: Working for Christian Unity in Southwest Pennsylvania

On the night he was betrayed, as recorded in John 17, Jesus prayed that all of his followers would be one—but today, there are thousands of quarreling Christian denominations.

Join the Rev. Liddy Barlow, executive minister of Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania (in-person), to learn how Christians in our region have been working to overcome our division for the past 200 years. We’ll discover the joys and challenges of seeking Christian unity, and explore the role the church can play in building interfaith relationships.

#### Jan. 15: Experiencing Christian Unity with the World Council of Churches

In 2022, 4,000 Christians from all over the world gathered in Karlsruhe, Germany, for the 11th Assembly of the World Council of Churches. Guided by the theme “God’s love moves the world to reconciliation and unity,” the agenda featured everything from the war in Ukraine to the challenge of climate change, plus theological debates, glorious worship, and truly awful cafeteria food!

Take your own virtual journey to Karlsruhe with the Rev. Liddy Barlow, executive minister of Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania (in-person). Rev. Barlow will share highlights of the assembly experience, exploring some of the key issues delegates addressed, and reflecting on what it was like to be in a “Christian Olympic village,” meeting siblings in Christ from across the globe.

#### Jan. 22: Yeshua: Exploring the Jewish Roots of Jesus

We will watch a video showing the Jewish atmosphere in which Jesus grew up, and the Jewish origins of the Christian faith. We will see the character, background, and personality of Jesus as he grew up and started his ministry.

### Soul Food | Good Samaritan Room

*Facilitators: Rev. Joe Hajdu and other class members*

#### Jan. 8, 15, and 22: Made for Goodness

We will begin discussing *Made for Goodness*, by Desmond Tutu and his daughter Mpho Tutu, starting with the Preface and the first three chapters.

New participants are welcome! For more information, contact the Rev. Joe Hajdu at [hajdu625@comcast.net](mailto:hajdu625@comcast.net).

# Children & Youth Ministry

Sara Hackett, Coordinator of Christian Education & Youth Ministry



**Sun., Jan. 15: Tween Bowling** 12–2 pm  
Following worship, youth in grades 4–6 will gather for lunch and bowling in the Bowling Alley. Friends are always welcome! Email Sara Hackett at [SaraH@coh.net](mailto:SaraH@coh.net) for more details.

## club one sixteen

Our regular schedule resumes on **Wed., Jan. 11**, 4:30–6 pm. To register a child (or update a registration), visit [ELPC.church](http://ELPC.church)

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.

## Save the Date for Our Tween Retreat

All tweens are invited to join us for our Tween Retreat at Crestfield Camp, **Sat.–Sun., March 25–26**. Look for more details soon.

## Youth & Young Adult Walking Football

Following worship on **Sun., Jan. 22**, youth in grades 6–12 will be joining the Young Adults for lunch and Walking Football in the Gym.

# Young Adult Ministry

Derail Holcomb, Coordinator of Young Adult Ministries

Happy New Year! The New Year brings us such joy and hope for the possibilities of the future. Yet, for some, the year's newness can also offer a bit of anxiety. While we are approaching the next season of our lives, let's continue to gather in community with one another, to remind us of the sacredness of our God and the beauty of God's creation.

**Fri., Jan. 20: Virtual Happy Hour** 6–8 pm

Plan on joining us for our monthly Virtual Happy Hour! The Zoom link will be available at [ELPC.church](http://ELPC.church). Questions? Email Derail at [DerailH@coh.net](mailto:DerailH@coh.net).

## Thank You to All Involved in Our Christmas Pageant

Thank you to all the children, youth, families, and church members who participated in and watched our annual Christmas Pageant.



## Attend Our New Meditation Hour

*"The ladder leading to the Kingdom is concealed within you, that is, in your soul"—Saint Isaac of Syria.*

Meditation is the practice of "looking deeply." In silence and withdrawal from the world of everyday concerns, we turn our attention inward and calm our bodies and minds. In this emptiness, we may see the world as if for the first time. We may see others as they are and find that the Kingdom of Heaven is truly within us; that we are living in God and God in us.



The Spiritual Life Committee invites you to join John Benedict in the Prayer Room on Tuesdays (Jan. 17–May 30), 6–7 pm, for an hour devoted to meditation.

The session will include an opening reading, silent sitting, and walking. No experience is necessary and all are welcome.

John Benedict is a retired psychologist and a longtime student and practitioner of Insight Meditation.

## Presbyterian Women

**PW Bible Study: Sabbath and Servitude**

**Tues., Jan. 3** 10 am–12 pm (Hybrid)

**Mon., Jan. 9** 7–8:30 pm (Zoom only)

"Stop!" That's the literal meaning of the word "sabbath." At the most basic level, keeping the Sabbath means we stop working. Discussions about Sabbath almost immediately lead to conversations about the nature of work. Genesis 2 and 3 offer an important foundation for our understanding of work. In Exodus, we see the prime examples of bad work and good work. Bad work makes no room for rest and good work always leaves room for Sabbath celebration. What does this mean for those who choose to ignore Sabbath or are forced to work without Sabbath?

Those attending our Tuesday Bible Study at the Church are invited to bring a brown bag lunch. Beverages will be provided.

For more information and the Zoom link, email [PW.ELPC@gmail.com](mailto:PW.ELPC@gmail.com).



## Register for Our Sabbath Day Workshop

On **Sat., Jan. 14**, 9 am–3 pm, the Spiritual Life Committee invites you to a day of rest, reflection, and conversation about how to faithfully practice Sabbath in our fast-paced, production-oriented, consumer culture.

Our day together will embody a Sabbath day of rest. We will collaboratively experiment with a variety of Sabbath practices and reflect upon them. There will be time for solitude, being in your body, instruction from Pastor BJ, and personal reflection with the aim of developing a plan for practicing Sabbath in your own life.

So whether you are retired, parenting young kids, a single young adult, or at the height of your career, our time together will aim to help you design a Sabbath practice for your season of life.

The cost is \$10 and includes lunch. Register with Norma Meyer at 412.441.3800 x211 by **Tues., Jan. 10**.





## LGBTQ Ministry

Wil Forrest, Coordinator of LGBTQ Ministry

**Sun., Jan. 15: Spiritual Gathering 12:30 pm**  
All allies and LGBTQIA+ folks alike are invited to our next monthly Spiritual Gathering.

To ask questions or RSVP, contact Wil Forrest at [Wil@coh.net](mailto:Wil@coh.net) or 412.441.3800 x218.

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

## Welcome Our New Facilities Staff Members



Over the last several weeks, we have welcomed a few new facilities staff members. In October, both Taneisha Taylor and Donald Parker joined the team, and then in December, Maurice Edmonds started. Taneisha and Maurice are part of the custodial staff and Donald is the floor supervisor leading the custodial and hospitality teams.

Please welcome Taneisha, Donald, and Maurice when you see them around our church building!

*Pictured left to right: Maurice, Donald, and Taneisha*



## ELPC People

If you have news to share, contact Megan Leisher at [MeganL@coh.net](mailto:MeganL@coh.net) or 412.441.3800 x122.

### Good News

- Join us in celebrating the birth of **Beatrice Kathleen Croyle**. Congratulations to parents Kathleen and Ryan, and sister Marian.
- Congratulations to **Eleanora Haas-Conrad**, who recently celebrated her baptism.
- Please welcome our new members:
  - **Kristin Cummings**
  - **Emily Snoek**
  - **Sara Torretti and Jay Miller**

### Thanks

Thank you ELPC members and friends, Walnut on Highland Apartment's management and residents, and ELPC Youth Ministry! Your generosity brightened the holiday season for **91 children and youth** living in our shared community. Year after year, we are able to ensure that vulnerable families can celebrate the Christmas season. Your kindness and care are beyond measure and greatly appreciated. Wishing you all a prosperous and blessed 2023!

—ELPC Board of Deacons

### Prayers

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

- Tim Tenbrink's father, Richard Tenbrink
- Stephen Simpson-Hunt's Aunt Pat Patterson
- Charles Struthers
- Crystal Gilroy's mother, Carla Brian
- Vivienne Selia's friend, Peg Wilson
- Former ELPC member Marita Hout

*“...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 Closures

ELPC will be closed on **Mon., Jan. 2**, in observance of the New Year's holiday, and **Mon., Jan. 16**, in observance of Martin Luther King Day.

## Make Connections at Phipps

The ELPC Connections Group will be visiting Phipps Conservatory's *Holiday Magic! Winter Flower Show and Light Garden* on **Sat., Jan. 7**, 3:30 pm. After walking through the exhibit, we will go to a nearby restaurant to eat and talk.

Please buy your ticket in advance and gather at the front entrance at 3:30 pm. The cost is \$24 for adults, \$14 for children, \$22 for seniors and students, and free if you are a member. We have a few free tickets available for those who would like one.

RSVP to [connectelpc@gmail.com](mailto:connectelpc@gmail.com).



## Cathedral Concerts in 2023

ELPC's *Cathedral Concerts* series will continue into the new year with an exciting slate of concerts. Contact Dr. Ed at [EdM@coh.net](mailto:EdM@coh.net) for more details.

Sun., March 5, 3 pm

### *I Go On Singing: Paul Robeson's Life in Word and Song*

Featuring Anthony Brown, Baritone

Sat., April 1, 4 pm

### *Carnegie Mellon University Wind Ensemble*

George Vosburgh & Thomas Thompson, Co-Directors  
Stephen Story, Associate Director  
Dr. Edward Alan Moore, Organ

Sun., April 30, 3 pm

### *Organ Artists Series of Pittsburgh*

Featuring Alan Morrison, Organist

Fri., May 19, 7:30 pm

### *Brass Roots and Organ*