

It's Mission Month at ELPC

October is Mission Month and the Mission Board, the Mission and Spiritual Life Committees, and the Board of Deacons have a series of opportunities and events scheduled. Learn more throughout this issue of *Reaching Out!*

World Communion Sunday & International Meal

On **Sun., Oct. 1**, the ELPC Board of Deacons will host its annual International Meal commemorating World Communion Sunday. Join us in the McKelvy Room after Sanctuary worship for a sample of global cuisine. For more info, contact Deacons Peta Harrigan Cole or Linda Sanders.

The Peace and Global Witness Offering also will be received. The proceeds from this special denominational offering empower and encourage individuals and congregations to be peacemakers in the world. Twenty-five percent of the offering is maintained locally and will be donated to the Pittsburgh Darfar Emergency Coalition.

Matthew 25 Sunday

During our Journey and Sanctuary worship services on **Sun., Oct. 8**, the Mission Board will lift up the three foci of a Matthew 25 congregation: *Building Congregational Vitality*, *Dismantling Structural Racism*, and *Eradicating Systemic Poverty* with slide shows and testimonials highlighting some of the ways ELPC lives into this designation.

Full Inclusion Sunday & Community Sing-A-Long

On **Sun., Oct. 15**, the Renaissance City Choir (RCC) will join the ELPC Chancel Choir during Sanctuary worship—and possibly make a surprise appearance to join the Journey Praise Team—as we celebrate our LGBTQIA+ community. The second annual Community Sing-A-Long, co-hosted by the Justice Committee, LGBTQIA+ Ministry, and RCC will be held in the Social Hall at 1:30 pm. The Pittsburgh Community will be invited to sing songs composed by people in the LGBTQIA+ community.

Sunday Services

**Celebration of the Lord's Supper*

Journey Worship | 8:45 am

Theme: Seeking Justice

Oct. 1* Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy
Oct. 8 Rev. Heather Schoenewolf
Oct. 15 Rev. BJ Woodworth
Oct. 22 Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy
Oct. 29 Rev. Jermaine Ross-Allam

Sanctuary Worship | 11 am

Oct. 1* Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy
Oct. 8 Rev. Heather Schoenewolf
Oct. 15 Rev. BJ Woodworth
Oct. 22 Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy
Oct. 29 Rev. Jermaine Ross-Allam

Taizé Prayer Service

Prayerful Song & Quiet Meditation

Wednesdays | 7 pm

Rev. BJ Woodworth

Worshiping with Rev. Ross-Allam

We are pleased to welcome the Rev. Jermaine Ross-Allam (He/Him) as our guest preacher on **Sun., Oct. 29**.



Rev. Ross-Allam is director of the Center for the Repair of Historic Harms at the Presbyterian Mission Agency PC(USA) where he is blessed

and determined to share the good news that repair and reparations are common sense for the common good. He was ordained as minister of Word and Sacrament by the Presbytery of the Twin Cities in 2013, where he began ordained ministry as executive director of 21st Century Academy at Kwanzaa Community Church PC(USA)—renamed Liberty Community Church—and associate pastor for Social Justice at Oak Grove Presbyterian Church.

East Liberty Presbyterian Church

info@coh.net | 412.441.3800

Staff Leadership

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**East Liberty
Presbyterian Church**

www.ELPC.church

Pastoral Message

The Rev. Heather Schoenewolf

Acting Co-Pastor and Pastor for Educational Ministries



Happy Mission Month!

In October, we celebrate that the Mission Ministries of ELPC are central to our life of faith, and lift up some of the many ways in which we as a community respond to God's call.

Although my official title is "Associate Pastor for Educational Ministries," it is the "mission" of ELPC that drew me in over 25 years ago. I was searching for a church home that would fully include my gifts for ministry as a woman, and one that lived out the love proclaimed in Scripture. And I found that here—a multi-racial church; a church that affirmed full inclusion of LGBTQIA+ persons—not just in word but in action; a church with dynamic worship services and programs inside the church—who was also present to the community outside it...

Unfortunately, the church across the ages has often engaged in practices that have brought about harm in the lives of others and labeled that effort "mission." In those instances the proclamation of the gospel in word and deed was not been invitational nor loving nor just. Instead, mission initiatives mirrored colonialism. People groups and individuals the world over were told that they must abandon their identities, customs, languages, traditions and beliefs in exchange for salvation. They were indoctrinated with a belief in Jesus Christ that prized a profession of faith at all costs—without realizing how the tactics uses to cultivate such a profession brought harm to God's beautifully diverse people.

But here at ELPC, we have held the belief that faith must be lived, that ALL are loved, that it is our duty to care not only for the people who live under our own roof, but for those who would be counted among the "least of these" in Matthew 25. At ELPC—25 years ago and now—I witnessed a community that prized diversity, that was willing to take risks to be just, that affirmed that we are all saved by grace through faith and that a proclamation of Gospel is about extending a radical welcome so that all will know Christ's love.

I invite you this mission month to think about how YOU might participate in Christ's Mission in the world. There are as many ways to respond to this call as there are people in the world. What are YOUR gifts? How can you engage in our shared mission and call?

Take some time this month to learn more about ELPC's Mission Ministries, to visit neighborhood ministry partners, attend a class after worship...but also strive to notice how we participate in Christ's Mission as we worship, attend Sunday School, and greet a stranger.

May they know we are Christians by our love!

Pastor Heather

Mission Matters

The Rev. Patrice Fowler-Searcy
Acting Co-Pastor and Pastor for Mission Ministries

Sat., Oct. 7: Voter Registration

The ELPC Justice Committee, the League of Women Voters, and the Black Political Empowerment Project will host a voter registration and informational event to cover a number of topics, including:

- Registering as a new voter
- Updating your voting info (address, name, party)
- Checking your registration status (includes polling location)
- Applying for a mail-in ballot
- Understanding the roles and duties of elected officials
- Knowing your rights

Questions? Contact Michele at michele2285@gmail.com or the League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh at voterservice@lwvpg.org.

Sun., Oct. 22: Updates on Our Community Partners

Join the ELPC Neighbors Committee as they welcome representatives from our community partners East Liberty Development, Inc., and Open Hand Ministries, as they give updates on their important work and ministries in the East End. A light lunch will be served. Zoom will be available at tiny.cc/community-updates.



Sat., Oct. 28: Volunteer with Amen to Action

From 8 am–12 pm, we will work with other area faith communities to pack food boxes for distribution throughout Allegheny County by the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. The event will be held at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (616 N. Highland Ave.).

This fun event is ideal for adults and school-aged children, and we are looking for lots of helping hands. Sign up to volunteer at tiny.cc/amen-to-action.

“Ask the Expert” About Home Improvement

Do you have a home project that could benefit from advice on how to make it more environmentally friendly? The Environmental Team of the Justice Committee is starting a pilot offering, “Ask the Expert,” for ELPC congregants.

Maybe you’d like to replace your windows and are looking to learn which companies and models are more efficient? Or you have a water heater replacement pending, and would like to consider a water heater heat pump, and learn about the IRA incentives? Or is solar on your mind?

Several people have done these things already, understand energy efficiency, and are willing to answer your questions in a phone conversation. Please write a few details about your topic, your phone number, and good times to call to e.team.elpc@gmail.com. No questions are too small or too big—we can help research or connect you with other resources for environmentally-minded home updates. We do not endorse any specific products or services, but will speak from years of experience of paying attention to energy reduction goals. We hope we can help you reach these goals!

Session News

In September, the ELPC Session:

- Adopted a Covenant of Presence,
- Shared next steps in creating a handbook for all committee chairs, and
- Discussed preliminary steps in creating our 2024 budget.

Stewardship Campaign

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “Plans to prosper you and not to harm you; plans to give you hope and a future.”
—Jeremiah 29:11

God’s assurance to God’s people through the words of Jeremiah remind us that we too worship a God who is guiding us—and all of God’s people—into a future of hope, prosperity and safety.



As we continue to navigate this interim season, we are reminded that God goes with us and before us. God is here, now—with wisdom and love and a call for today. And God leads us onward toward the future of God’s design.

As we begin our annual stewardship campaign, the Stewardship Committee invites you to participate in God’s plan for our church and our ministries, for it is through the sharing of our time, talents and treasure that we engage God’s joyful vision for us and for the world.

Christian Education

The Rev. Heather Schoenewolf
Acting Co-Pastor and Pastor for Educational Ministries

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

Combined Adult Class

On **Sun., Oct. 29**, join the Facing Systemic Racism Committee and the Rev. Jermaine Ross-Allam, director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Center for Repair of Historical Harms, for a combined class. Rev. Ross-Allam will be our guest preacher at both Journey and Sanctuary worship.

Children & 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: Rev. Henk Bossers

Our class will explore the scripture passages that are represented in our Sanctuary's stained glass windows. The scripture will remain our primary focus as we engage in a discussion around its original and current representation in our windows.

Parenting Circle | Room 213

Facilitator: Trish Buben and other class members

October: Starting Our New Year

Anyone involved in parenting is welcome to join us. We share experiences, resources, prayer, and scripture as we explore how our faith builds and nourishes our family lives, as well as nurtures our parent/child relationships.

Soul Food | Good Samaritan Room & Zoom

Facilitators: Rev. Joe Hajdu and other class members

October: A discussion of chapters 2-5 of *Barking to the Choir: The Power of Radical Kinship*, by Fr. Gregory Boyle, founder of Homeboy Industries.

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

Seekers | Garth Overlook Room & Zoom

Facilitator: Gwen Puza, gpuza9@gmail.com

Oct. 1: A Women's Lectionary for the Whole Church

Rev. Wilda Gafney, PhD, will discuss, via video, her new book, *A Women's Lectionary for the Whole Church*. Rev. Gafney is a womanist biblical scholar and a professor of Hebrew Bible at Brite Divinity School in Fort Worth, Texas. Additional books by her include *Womanist Midrash: A Reintroduction to Women of the Torah and of the Throne*, and *Daughters of Miriam: Women Prophets in Ancient Israel*. She is an Episcopal priest, canonically resident in the Diocese of Pennsylvania, a former Army chaplain, and congregational pastor in the AME Zion Church.

Oct. 8: Sacred Earth, Sacred Soul: Celtic Wisdom for Reawakening Our Souls

Dr. John Philip Newell is a Celtic teacher and author who calls the modern world to reawaken to the sacredness of Earth and every human being. In this video, Dr. Newell discusses Celtic spirituality as a "vision of the earth as sacred" and speaks of "that which is deepest in every human being is of God". Christianity, as we know it, is evolving. Dr. Newell discusses the yearnings that have led many of us to be dissatisfied with our Western Christianity inheritance.

Oct. 15 & 22; Nov. 5, 12, & 19: Meeting Jesus the Christ Again: A Conservative Progressive Faith

Pastor Emeritus Rev. Dr. Bob Chesnut was ELPC's senior pastor from 1988-2002. He was the founder of the Seekers class in 1994. In a five-week series, via Zoom, he will discuss his book *Meeting Jesus the Christ Again: A Conservative Progressive Faith*.

Christians have long been divided, but especially these days, over questions such as: Is Christianity basically about following Jesus or believing in his divinity and atoning death? Are we humans fundamentally creatures of original sin or original blessing? Is Jesus basically our teacher and guide or our Lord and Savior? Do only Christians get to heaven? Are Christians called only to individual morality or also to social justice? Dr. Chesnut's book helps us get to both/and rather than either/of thinking about these and other faith issues.

Oct. 15: Introduction-Chapter 2

Oct. 22: Chapters 3-5

Dr. Chesnut is offering the book for only \$10. It is an easy and thought-provoking read. To order a book, give your name and \$10 to Carla Depperman, by early October. It is also available on Amazon.

Children & Youth Ministry

Sara Hackett, Director of Christian Education & Youth Ministry

Sat., Oct. 7: Family Kindermusik Class, Playtime, & Lunch 11am

Join Kindermusik educator Christa Beck for a family musical experience for parents/caregivers and their young children (geared at children up to age 7). After the joy of singing and moving we will have open play in the nursery and gym along with lunch.

RSVP to Sara Hackett at SaraH@con.net. This is the first in our monthly events for families with children.

Sponsored by the Children and Families Ministry team to build a caring community of families at ELPC, where kids and adults feel loved and empowered to explore their faith.



Sun., Oct. 8: Tween Corn Maze

Following worship, youth in grades 4–6 are heading to Howling Hills Corn Maze in Allenport, Pennsylvania. The eight-acre maze also features a hayride and other fall fun. The cost is \$20 to cover the maze and lunch—and scholarships are available. We will return to ELPC at 5:30 pm. You can RSVP and fill out a permission slip online at ELPC.church.

Sat., Oct. 28: Volunteer to Pack Food 8:30 am–12 pm

We will be participating in packing food boxes with Amen to Action at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary for distribution by the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. Youth in grades 7–12 are invited to lunch and games in Highland Park afterward (12–1:30 pm). RSVP to Sara Hackett at SaraH@con.net if youth are coming without a parent. Adults and teens and/or school age children are invited to volunteer together and can sign up at tiny.cc/amen-to-action.

Fall Retreat at Lamppost Farms



Taking place **November 11–12**, in Columbiana, Ohio, this retreat is part of the Confirmation Class *AND* open to all youth in grades 7–12 who want to hear and explore just some of Jesus' many stories about birds, and farmers, and growing grapes while on an actual farm.

Named after the lamppost in the *Chronicles of Narnia*, Lamppost Farm exists to provide meaningful learning opportunities by engaging in purposeful and productive work, contagious relationships, and the celebration of "good ordinary food." Their goal is to use agriculture and its fruit to build individuals and groups in deeper relationship with themselves, one another, God, and God's creation. Whether raising and processing chickens; growing, making and canning salsa; milking the cow; or turning clay into a pizza oven; experiences at Lamppost Farm enable guests the chance to see with their eyes, hear with their ears, explore with their hands, and understand with their hearts. Learn more at LamppostFarm.com.

Young Adults Bowling & Pizza

All young adults, age 18–30s, are invited to join us after worship on **Sun., Oct. 1**, in ELPC's original 1930s duck pin bowling alley on the ground floor for bowling and pizza. Friends and visitors are welcome!

Hosted by Sonia Degenholtz. Questions? Reach out to Sara Hackett at SaraH@con.net.

And mark your calendars for **Thurs., Nov. 5**, to meet our young adult group for lunch at Patron Mexican Grill across the street from ELPC.

Confirmation Class

On **Sun., Oct. 15**, 12:15–3 pm, in the Second Floor Parlor, Confirmation Class will discuss Who Is God?—an introduction to the three persons of the trinity and our ability to relate to God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer.

club one sixteen

Kids and youth in grades 1–12 are invited to **club one sixteen**, our midweek ministry. We gather each Wednesday, 4:30–7 pm, for Bible Study, games, art, & dinner together.

For more information, email Sara Hackett at SaraH@coh.net.



Murals from Montreat

The two murals hanging in the ELPC Chancel are by artist Steve Prince, the featured artist-in-residence at this year's Presbyterian Association of Musicians Annual Worship and Music Conference in Montreat, North Carolina. Dr. Ed Moore brought these pieces back from Montreat to share them with the ELPC community. Learn more at tiny.cc/steve-prince-murals.



Connections Potluck

Join ELPC's Connections Group for a potluck lunch following Sanctuary worship on **Sun., Oct. 15**, 12:15 pm, in the Music Room on the third floor.



Scan the QR code or visit tiny.cc/connections-potluck to sign up and indicate what food you can bring to share. For more info, contact connectelpc@gmail.com.

Gratitude Retreat

The Spiritual Life Committee invites you to participate in a time of rest, reflection, prayer, conversation, and giving thanks at the Villa Maria Retreat Center in Pulaski, Pennsylvania, **Fri.–Sun., Nov. 17–19**. Keep a look out for more details.

Presbyterian Women

PW Bible Study: The Exorcism in Gerasa

Mon., Oct. 2 7–8:30 pm (Zoom Only)

Tues., Oct. 3 10 am–12 pm (Hybrid)

After calming the storm on the sea, Jesus and his disciples sailed to a gentile region east of Galilee. There, Jesus encountered a demoniac, who addressed Jesus as “Son of the Most High God” (Luke 8:26–39). The suffering man had been living, naked, among the tombs and the townspeople bound the demoniac’s hands and feet. The demoniac’s extreme vulnerability to Jesus transformed both the man and the community.

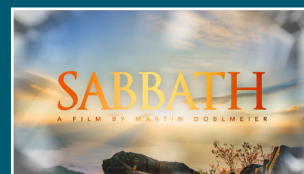


Those attending in person on Tuesday morning are invited to bring a bagged lunch and stay for fellowship after the lesson.

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

Dinner and a Film

On **Fri., Oct. 27**, 5:30–8 pm, the Spiritual Life and Justice Committees invite you to an evening of fellowship, food, and formation around the ancient practice of Sabbath.



We will gather for a simple meal together and then view the documentary, *SABBATH: An Ancient Practice Meets the Modern World*. This collection of short stories explores the history of one of the world's most important spiritual practices and its timeless relevance for a stressed-out, modern world. From the Biblical accounts of Creation, to the 10 Commandments, to the Puritans landing in the New World, to the contemporary practice of a “tech-sabbath,” *SABBATH* ties together our collective history, our health practices, our response to God's invitation, and the search for a more sustainable way of life.

RSVP to Norma Meyer at **412.441.3800 x211** by **Sun., Oct. 22**, and include any food allergies. Scan the QR code to see the trailer.



LGBTQIA+ Ministry

Wil Forrest, Coordinator of LGBTQ Ministry



Sun., Oct. 8: Spiritual Gathering

You are invited to attend our LGBTQIA+ Ministry's next Spiritual Gathering following our Sanctuary worship service. Join us and share conversation and lunch. Allies and LGBTQIA+ folks alike are welcome to attend!

Questions? Contact Wil Forrest at wil@coh.net or 412.441.3800 x218.

God Created You. God Loves You. Be Yourself.

News From Your PNC

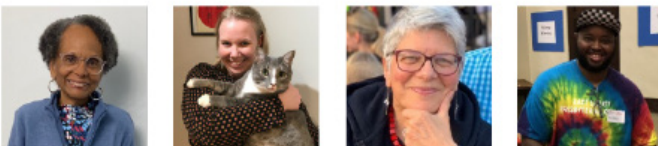
During August and into September, we held a series of Listening Sessions to gain in-depth insights from members of the congregation regarding what people are looking for in pastoral leadership. In September, we began to familiarize ourselves with the formal materials used by the Presbytery when a congregation is seeking a new pastor. Also in September, we were reviewing materials other similar congregations have used in their pastoral searches.

Our specific charge for the month of October is to work with the Presbytery to complete a Ministry Profile which will communicate externally what our congregation is looking for when we advertise the position externally. The Ministry Profile includes a section where we describe our congregation's vision for ministry and the community. This is why the feedback you provided in the survey and the Listening Sessions is so valuable. We are taking what we heard from the congregation to complete these sections of the profile. This way, when the profile of our congregation is posted nationally by the Presbytery, the pastoral candidates will be able to learn about who we are as a congregation and what we need most in the future.

Stay tuned as we continue to work this fall and keep our committee and our congregation in your prayers.

—Andrea DeVries

ELPC Pastor Nominating Committee: Doug Booth, Bill Buchanan, David Carl, Andrea DeVries, Jim Eng, Linda Lane (Chair), Rebecca McGregor (Secretary), Polly McQueen, Antwone Wright



Use of Pronouns

The Justice Committee invites you to use your personal pronouns when introducing yourself to others. You may have noticed new name tags at Rally Day or the Extravaganza that included a space for you to add your pronouns. We also have pronoun stickers that you can add to your permanent ELPC name tag.

Pronouns are linguistic tools that we use to refer to people. Common pronouns include **she/her/hers**, **he/him/his**, and **they/them/theirs**. Nonbinary pronouns include **she/they**, **he/they**, and **they/they**. There are other nonbinary pronouns.

Pronouns are integral to who we are, and we share pronouns because we want to avoid assuming someone's pronouns based on factors like appearance. By sharing our own pronouns routinely, we encourage others to do the same and demonstrate that we understand the importance of sharing pronouns. Using someone's correct pronouns is an important way of affirming someone's identity and is a fundamental step in being an ally.

ELPC People

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

Good News

- Congratulations to Emily Snoek and Jason Griess on the birth of their daughter **Delta Mae Snoek Griess**

Prayers

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

- Pamela Napier on the passing of her sister, Andrea Napier
- The family of the Rev. Hydie Houston. She served as associate pastor at ELPC from 1990–2001

“As a diverse community of believers, we strive to follow God—the Creator who calls us, Jesus 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 Closure

In honor and recognition of **Indigenous Peoples’ Day, Mon., Oct. 9**, staff will be on holiday for a well deserved day off.

OHM Workdays Return

Our community mission partner, Open Hand Ministries (OHM) has started up house rehab workdays. Volunteers are needed on **Sat., Oct. 7**, and weekly on Wednesdays, 9 am–3 pm. No special skills are needed, just a desire to do some manual labor and enjoy fellowship while serving our neighbors!

This fall, OHM will be finishing up one property and starting on new house, both located in Garfield.

For more information about these opportunities for hands on mission, what to bring, volunteer forms, directions, etc., please contact Frank Bauerle (ELPC Neighbors Committee) at **817.705.6856** or frbauerle@yahoo.com, or Tim Raufer, director of construction services for OHM, at **412.999.4267** or traufer@openhandpittsburgh.org.



Thomas Ospital to Perform at ELPC

ELPC’s *Cathedral Concerts* series will kick off its 13th season on **Fri., Oct. 27**, 7:30 pm, with organist Thomas Ospital.

Titulaire of the grand organ at St. Eustache Church in Paris, Ospital is a young artist who has quickly earned a place amongst the world’s finest concert organists. He has won prizes at several international competitions, including the *Chartres Competition*, *Xavier Darasse Competition*, and *Saragossa and Angers* competitions.



Dedicated to the art of improvisation in all of its forms, he typically includes improvisations in his concerts and frequently accompanies silent films as well.

The concert will be co-presented with the Organ Artists Series of Pittsburgh in the ELPC Sanctuary. Tickets are free for our ELPC community. Contact Dr. Ed for more details.

And be sure to save the date for **Sun., Nov. 12**, 3 pm, as rising violinist—and ELPC’s own—Cody Conley performs his first solo *Cathedral Concert*. Pianist Grace Burns also will perform.