



EAST LIBERTY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

116 South Highland Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15206 412.441.3800 www.ELPC.church

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. (Strategic Vision mission statement, 2011)

FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS DECEMBER 31, 2023 — YEAR OF OUR LORD 11 AM SANCTUARY WORSHIP

PRELUDE

“Spirit of the Living God”
“Jesus, Name Above All Names”

Gerald Savage, *piano*

WELCOME & CHURCH NEWS

The Rev. Dr. Hendrik J.H. Bossers
78-year-old Retired Presbyterian Minister

* SHARING GOD’S PEACE

Leader: La paz de Cristo esté con ustedes.
People: Y también contigo.

The Rev. Dr. Hendrik J.H. Bossers
The peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Lenore Williams

Leader: Praise God from the highest heavens. Praise God in the heights!
People: Praise God, all angels. Praise God, heavenly host!
Leader: Praise God, sun and moon. Praise God, shining stars!
People: Let us, and all of creation, praise the name of God!

* PROCESSIONAL HYMN #127

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

WE’LL WALK IN THE LIGHT

CALL TO CONFESSION

Lenore Williams

Leader: Jesus, our Lord came into an indifferent world, yet his life revealed the inner thoughts of many. Let us confess our sins before God and one another that we may receive release from our sin.

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Lenore Williams

Merciful God, we confess that we have not lived as your faithful people. We have kept silent in the midst of prejudice and hatred. We have been idle in the face of violence and injustice. We have not been a light to the nations, and our lives have not revealed your glory. Forgive us, merciful God. Repair the ugliness of our sin and restore in us your beautiful grace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

TIME OF SILENT CONFESSION

* Indicates where you may please rise in body or spirit.

* Indicates where you may rise in body or spirit.

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

Lenore Williams

Leader: Siblings in Christ, God forgives us, shows us mercy with the dawning of each new day, and covers us with the robe of righteousness. Know that you are forgiven in Jesus Christ and live as God's beloved. Friends, believe the good news of the gospel!

People: En Jesucristo tenemos perdón. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.
¡Alaben a Dios! Praise God!

SUNG RESPONSE HYMN #137

"He Came Down"

HE CAME DOWN

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Psalm 8

The Rev. Joe Hajdu

MOMENTS WITH OUR CHILDREN

The Rev. Dr. Hendrik J.H. Bossers & The Rev. Joe Hajdu

Children of any age are welcome to come forward for Moments with our Children.

There is no Extended Session offered this morning. The nursery is open for play to young children who are accompanied by their parents/caregivers during worship; the service is livestreamed into that space.

HYMN #145

"What Child Is This"

GREENSLEEVES

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

The Rev. Dr. Hendrik J.H. Bossers

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Luke 2:22-40

The Rev. Dr. Hendrik J.H. Bossers

SERMON

"Presentation"

The Rev. Dr. Hendrik J.H. Bossers

TIME OF SILENT REFLECTION

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION & THE LORD'S PRAYER

The Rev. Joe Hajdu

The Lord's Prayer can be found on pg. 35 (English), on pg. 40 (Español) or on pg. 45 (한국어) in the Glory to God hymnal.

OFFERING INVITATION

The Rev. Joe Hajdu

We offer our gifts in response to God's love, and the grace of Jesus Christ, which we seek to make known through the ministries of this congregation.

You are invited to use the QR code to the right if you would like to make a donation in support of ELPC. A donation box is also available in the Sanctuary.



* Indicates where you may rise in body or spirit.

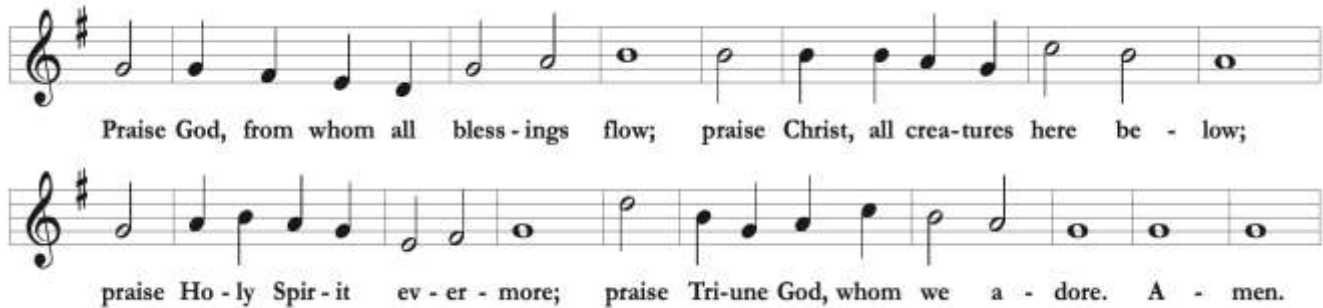
OFFERTORY ANTHEM

“Friend of God”

Journey Praise Team

* DOXOLOGY AT THE PRESENTATION

OLD HUNDREDTH



*

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING & DEDICATION

The Rev. Dr. Hendrik J.H. Bossers
The Rev. Joe Hajdu

Leader: El Señor esté con ustedes.

People: Y también contigo.

Leader: Levantemos nuestros corazones.

People: Lo tenemos levantado al Señor.

Leader: Demos gracias al Señor nuestro Dios.

People: Es justo dar gracias y
alabanzas a Dios.

Leader: Loving God, we give you thanks for the light of the world, Jesus Christ, through whom we have received adoption as your children. With Jesus our brother, we dedicate ourselves in ministry to the world so that we may live as heirs of your promises to the honor and glory of your name.

People: Amén.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give God
thanks and praise.

Amen.

* RECESSIONAL HYMN #136

“Go, Tell It on the Mountain”

GO TELL IT

* CHARGE & BENEDICTION

The Rev. Dr. Hendrik J.H. Bossers

POSTLUDE

“In the Bleak Midwinter”

Gerald Savage, *piano*



As part of ELPC's mission to extend radical hospitality to all, our full worship service is now being livestreamed on Facebook and archived at www.ELPC.church.

This notice is to inform you that by being in attendance, you give permission for incidences where you appear within the video. Should you have any questions, please see one of our pastors.

Please silence all electronic devices before the service begins.

◆ PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE

Preaching: The Rev. Dr. Hendrik J.H. Bossers
Liturgists: The Rev. Joe Hajdu
Lenore Williams
Musicians: Gerald Savage
Journey Praise Team Music Director
Journey Praise Team
Beadle: Liz Hopkins
Crucifer: Ian Kuchera
Sound: Tim Benedict
Wayne Gaines

◆ SUNDAY FELLOWSHIP

Coffee and water are available in the Balaka Room.

◆ WORSHIP FLOWERS

The poinsettia plants in the Sanctuary are in loving memory of the Honorable Andrew W. Mellon and Mr. and Mrs. Richard Beatty Mellon.

If you would like to sponsor flowers for our weekly worship service in honor or memory of a loved one, contact Frances Wilson (wilson.franr@gmail.com). The cost is \$200. *Our beautiful arrangements are provided by Bloom Brigade (www.bloombrigade.com).*

◆ SUNDAY WORSHIP

8:45 am.....Journey Worship. An interactive, energetic service for those seeking a fresh encounter with the gospel of Jesus Christ.
Jan 7 — The Rev. Heather Schoenewolf preaching.

11 am.....Sanctuary Worship. Our largest service with a multi-cultural congregation and music from organ, piano and choir.
Jan 7 — The Rev. Heather Schoenewolf preaching.

◆ WEEKDAY WORSHIP

Taizé: Prayerful Song and Quiet Meditation
Chants and periods of meditative silence modeled after the Taizé community in France. Rev. BJ Woodworth leads this service in the Chapel.

Wednesdays, 7 pm

Prayer Room (*in Highland Ave hallway*)

Come to sit and pray in silence. Come to experience the quiet in the midst of the wonderful busyness.

Available everyday

◆ WEEKLY SPIRITUAL LIFE OFFERINGS

Contemplative Prayer

Rev. BJ Woodworth will lead a time on Zoom of 30 minutes of communal silence and guided meditation on scripture. We will meditate on the Psalms, using the translation *Psalms for Praying* by Nan C. Merrill.

Mondays, 7:30 to 8 am

Meeting ID: 959 8065 3992

Passcode: bestill

Meditation Hour

Join John Benedict, retired psychologist and practitioner of insight meditation, in the Chapel for an hour devoted to meditation, which includes an opening reading, silent sitting, and walking. All are welcome!

Tuesdays, 6-7 pm

Cathedral Yoga

Yamuna will lead yoga in-person in the Sanctuary.

Wednesdays, 6 to 7 pm (*before Taizé*)

WELCOME VISITORS!

We are grateful to have you join us for worship this morning and ask you to register your name in our red Friendship Books.

To learn more about our programs, church activities and volunteer services, we invite you to also:

Pick up a copy of our newsletter, the *Reaching Out*, either in the Narthex or at the Hospitality Desk near the Highland Avenue doors.

Attend an *Inquirers' Class* to learn more about ELPC, Presbyterian theology, and to explore membership. Please contact Megan Leisher for more info (MeganL@coh.net).

Call the Church Office (412.441.3800), or visit the ELPC website at www.ELPC.church.

TODAY AT ELPC

Today's Deacons-On-Duty (DOD)

Every Sunday, a DOD (*Deacon-on-Duty*) is available to assist with any emergencies that may occur during our services.

The *Sanctuary* service DOD is Jo Ellen Aleshire.

Church Tour — TODAY

Tim VanFleet will guide a *Hidden Places* tour today, Dec 31. Please gather in the Highland Lobby after the 11 am service to participate. All are welcome!



PW Bible Study: Sacred Encounters — Jan 2 and 8

Please join Presbyterian Women for their Bible Study on Tuesday, Jan 2 from 10 am-Noon (hybrid), or on Monday, Jan 8 from 7-8:30 pm (Zoom only). Those attending Tuesday morning are invited to bring a bagged lunch and stay for fellowship after the lesson. For more info and the Zoom link, email PW.ELPC@gmail.com.

Tween and Teen Snow Tubing— Jan 7

Tweens and teens are going snowtubing at Boyce Park Sunday January 7 from 12-3pm. The cost is \$10. Scholarships available. Contact SaraH@coh.net.

LGBTQIA+ Ministry Gathering — Jan 14

You are invited to the monthly spiritual gathering of ELPC's LGBTQIA+ Ministry at 12:30 pm on Sunday, Jan 14 to share conversation and lunch. Contact Wil Forrest, LGBTQIA+ Ministry Coordinator, to attend or for more info (Wil@coh.net; 412.441.3800 x218).

Adult Education Series — Begins Jan 28

All are welcome to the first-ever LGBTQIA+ Ministry-hosted Adult Education hour on three consecutive Sundays on Jan 28, Feb 4 and 11. The topic will be examining what the Bible does and does not have to say about homosexuality. This series will be led by our pastors and will be in the McKelvy Room.

Book Launch- Jan 28

The Facing Systemic Racism Committee (FSR) and the Faith Formation Board are co-sponsoring a Book Launch of Beverly Harris-Schenz's new book *Living While Black: My Experience with Everyday Racism* on Sunday, January 28, 2024, 1:30-3:30 pm in the Social Hall. Beverly is a member of the congregation and active in the

FSR. She will present an "interactive reading" in which she will read personal stories from her book and engage the audience in a discussion of the issues presented. All congregational members, their children, friends, and the general public are warmly invited.

"Ask the Expert" Offering from the Environmental Team

The Environmental Team of the Justice Committee now offers the *Ask the Expert* pilot for the ELPC faith family. Do you have a home project that could benefit from advice on how to make it more environmentally friendly? Maybe you'd like to replace windows and are looking to learn which companies and models are more energy efficient? Or need a water heater replacement or are interested in solar? Several people have done these things already and are willing to answer your questions in a phone conversation. *We do not endorse any specific products or services.* Share project details, your phone number, and preferred call times via email to e.team.elpc@gmail.com.

Contemplative Prayer — Mondays

Please join Pastor BJ Woodworth on Zoom (Meeting ID: 959 8065 3992; Passcode: bestill) for Monday morning *Contemplative Prayer* from 7:30-8 am for 30 minutes of communal silence and guided meditation on scripture.

Meditation Hour — Tuesdays

The Spiritual Life Committee invites you to join John Benedict in the Chapel each Tuesday from 6-7 pm for an hour devoted to meditation. John is a retired psychologist and a long time student and practitioner of insight meditation. No experience necessary, and all are welcome!





As a caring congregation of faith, we ask you to remember the following people in your prayers:

Dr. Linda Lane's sister, Rev. Gail Bowman,
Dr. Charma Dudley's friend Dr. John Ambrose and family,
and friend Dr. Nancy Kunsak,
Andrea DeVries and family, Pam Kimmel, Sondra
MacArtney, Rev. Dr. Bob Chesnut,
Doris Dick's sister-in-law Kerry, Karen Fraser,
Peta Harrigan-Cole's brother Tony, and
Pepo Mazingi's son Emmanuel.

Volunteers Needed to be Beadles and Crucifers

There are many ways to participate in our worship services! We are currently seeking volunteers to be a Beadle or Crucifer at our 11 am Sanctuary worship service. The duties of the Beadle include processing at the beginning of the service with the Bible, and the Crucifer also processes while carrying the cross. If you would like to help, or have questions about these roles, please speak to one of today's Beadles, or email Mario Seneca (seneca459@hotmail.com).

Do You Speak Spanish and Want to Participate in Worship?
If you would like to read the Spanish phrases during our worship, please contact Norma (412.441.3800 x211).

Taizé Podcast Now Available

If you are unable to come to our Taizé services in person on Wednesdays at 7 pm, stream or download a 15-minute contemplative recording each week. Each podcast includes a brief time of centering, music, a meditation, and a closing prayer. You can find a link to listen to the recordings at www.ELPC.church, in our *This Week in Worship* email news flash each Friday, or in our new app.



All Church Retreat

May 3 to 5, 2024

ELPC's *All Church Retreat* will be at Lutherlyn Camp (Prospect, PA). Whether you join us for the whole weekend or for Saturday only, we will have delicious meals, time to rest in creation, and intentional community building activities.

Workshops and worship will be intergenerational.

Registration and details will be available in February.

Contact Sara Hackett
(SaraH@coh.net)

Chapel Market

Hours and Donation Requests

The *Chapel Market* is now open on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month from 5-7 pm, in addition to being open every Thursday from 10 am—Noon.



The *Chapel Market* is in need of toiletry items, including bar soap, tooth brushes and paste, lotion, shampoo, toilet paper, etc., in addition to cold-weather clothing for men, woman and children.

Donations can be left at the Highland Lobby, or dropped off at the *Chapel Market* when open.

Visit us online at
www.ELPC.church

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES FOR ALL AGES

Church School classes resume on
Sunday, January 7, 2024
9:45 to 10:45 am

◆ ADULTS ◆

Journey with Scripture (Fellowship Rm)
Parenting Circle (Rm 213)
Seekers (Garth Overlook Rm)
Soul Food (Good Samaritan Rm)

◆ CHILDREN & YOUTH ◆

Nursery (under 3) — Nursery Suite, Room 110a
Preschool — Nursery Suite, Room 110b
K-3rd grade — Room 206
4th-6th grade — Room 211
7th-12th grade — Second Floor Parlor