



# 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)*

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## FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT MARCH 9, 2025 — 11 AM SANCTUARY WORSHIP

### TIME OF PREPARATION

Faith, for me, isn’t an argument, a catechism, a philosophical “proof.” It is instead a lens, a way of experiencing life, and a willingness to act. As the Bible says: *taste and see.*

— from “Take This Bread” by Sara Miles

### MUSIC MINISTRY

“Audi, benigne conditor”

Gerald Near

*O Kind Creator, bow thine ear to mark the cry, to know the tear  
Before thy throne of mercy spent in this thy holy fast of Lent.*

“Prelude on Rhosymedre”

Ralph Vaughan Williams

*My song is love unknown.*

Dr. Edward Alan Moore, organ

### WELCOME & CHURCH NEWS

Rev. BJ Woodworth

*Everyone in worship today is encouraged to please sign your name in the red Friendship Books that are in each pew.  
Doing so will help ELPC maintain a pastoral connection with all who worship with us. Thank you!*

### CALL TO WORSHIP

Sam Studebaker

Leader: Jesus began his ministry to the world led by the Spirit into the wilderness.

People: **Let us be led by the Spirit into uncomfortable places.  
God, teach us in the wilderness!**

Leader: In those forty days, and in that place, Jesus was faced with hunger, doubt, and temptation.

People: **As we seek to follow Jesus, may God teach us and rescue us!**

Leader: Jesus entered the wilderness trusting God with his beliefs and his doubts.

People: **As we journey ahead, we rejoice in a God who meets us right where we are!**

### \* PROCESSIONAL HYMN #167

“Forty Days and Forty Nights”

AUS DER TIEFE RUFTE ICH

### MOMENTS WITH OUR CHILDREN

Sara Hackett

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

- *Children age 4-6th grade will go to Sunday School: Sacred Stories. Parents will pick up their kids after worship (age 4-3rd grade in Room 206; grades 4-6 in Room 207).*
- *Children age 3 and younger can play, sing songs and hear stories in the nursery from 8:30 am-12:30 pm.*

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

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**SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM**

*Presentation of:* Arthur Jeffries, child of Mark and Beth Jeffries

*Profession of Faith*

*Act of Baptizing*

The Deacons and the Environmental Team of the Justice Committee partner to donate a tree seedling to *Tree Pittsburgh Heritage Nursery* for every baptism in our church.

\* **SHARING GOD'S PEACE**

Rev. Dr. Michael A. Diaz

Leader: La paz de Cristo esté con ustedes.

The peace of Christ be with you.

People: **Y también contigo.**

**And also with you.**

**SPECIAL MUSIC**

“String Duo No. 1 in G Major, K. 423”

W.A. Mozart

I. Allegro

**CALL TO CONFESSION**

Sam Studebaker

Leader: Beloved, how often do we fall into the trap of proving ourselves, believing that we are only as good as our accomplishments, our productivity, or the approval of others? Lent invites us to heal our relationship with ourselves. Loving yourself is necessary in order to love others. We come before God just as we are, bringing our longing for connection, our broken places, and the truths we are still learning to name. Let us now confess.

**RESPONSIVE PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Sam Studebaker

Leader: Loving God, we confess that we have believed the lies our value is determined by what we produce or how well we fit in.

People: **We have hidden parts of ourselves instead of embracing the fullness of God within us.**

Leader: We confess that we have sometimes failed in our relationships.

People: **We have forgotten that relationships are not measured by their permanence, but by their ability to stretch us toward growth and grace.**

Leader: Forgive us for not always loving our neighbors as we love ourselves.

People: **Forgive us for not loving ourselves as God loves us.**

**TIME OF SILENT CONFESSION**

**ASSURANCE OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS**

Sam Studebaker

Leader: Friends, even in our brokenness, God welcomes us.

People: **En Jesucristo tenemos perdón.**

**In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.**

**¡Alaben a Dios!**

**Thanks be to God!**

**RESPONSIVE HYMN #627** (*remain seated; sung 2x*)

I LOVE YOU, LORD

“I Love You, Lord”

**FIRST READING**

A reading from “Love Big” by Rozella Haydée White

Sam Studebaker

If we don't love ourselves, how can we profess that we love our neighbor as we love ourselves? For so long, I have made loving myself someone else's job instead of taking on this holy task myself. I have devalued myself, the one made in the image of the Divine, and struggled to give myself what I need... When we don't love ourselves, the relationships in our life suffer. For me, the result of not loving myself was a marriage that ended in divorce and a dearly held friendship that came to an end. While I'm clear that I wasn't the only one responsible for the end of these relationships, I have also come to realize that not loving myself or trusting my instincts leads to disastrous results. When I met my now ex-husband, I didn't love myself. I didn't even know myself well enough to like myself. As a result, I married someone who didn't really know me because I had not taken the necessary time for reflection to know who I was at that moment in time. When we don't know ourselves, it's nearly impossible to love ourselves in ways that are healthy and life-giving. *May God bless the hearing of these words. Amen.*

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March 9 • First Sunday in Lent

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

\* **HYMN #783** "When We Are Tested" ANGELS OF HEALING

**GOSPEL READING** Luke 4:1-13 NT page 83  
Rev. Woodworth

**SERMON** "Love Begins with Us" Rev. Dr. Diaz  
*I am created in love. I am worthy of love. I am becoming love. As I learn to love myself, I learn to love as God loves.*

**TIME OF SILENT REFLECTION**

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION & THE LORD'S PRAYER** Rev. Woodworth  
*After Pastor BJ says, "Hear our prayer, O God," the congregation will respond,*  
**"Our refuge and fortress, our shelter and shade."**

*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** Rev. Woodworth

*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, or visit [www.ELPC.church/donate](http://www.ELPC.church/donate).*



**OFFERTORY ANTHEM** "Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days" Linda Cable Shute  
Text: Claudia Frances Hernaman

*Lord, who throughout these forty days, for us did fast and pray,  
Teach us with you to mourn our sins, and close by you to stay.*

*As you did hunger bear and thirst, so teach us, gracious Lord,  
To die to self, and always live by your most holy word.*

*And through these days of penitence, and through your Passion-tide,  
Forevermore, in life and death, O Lord, with us abide.*

\* **DOXOLOGY AT THE PRESENTATION #607** OLD HUNDREDTH

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow. Praise Christ, all creatures here below.  
Praise Holy Spirit evermore. Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.**

\* **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING & DEDICATION** Rev. Dr. Diaz  
Rev. Woodworth

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: With thanksgiving in our hearts, we bless the gifts we bring. May God's healing and hope transform the world. May Divine love make an everlasting mark on our hearts as we bear witness to the good news of Jesus Christ. **Amen!**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give God  
thanks and praise.**

\* **RECESSIONAL HYMN #366** "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling" HYFRYDOL

\* **CHARGE & BENEDICTION** Rev. Dr. Diaz

**POSTLUDE** "Prelude in F" Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel  
Dr. Moore, organ

Notes regarding the music sung in today's service is available on our website —

<http://tiny.cc/elpcworshipnotes>

You can also scan this QR code to be directed to that info on our website.



Our full worship service is being livestreamed on Facebook and archived at [www.ELPC.church](http://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. Assisted listening devices are available for our Sanctuary worship in the Ushers' Room. Please print your contact info and device number on the sign-out sheet if you need to use one. Please silence all electronic devices before the service begins.

#### ◆ PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE

Preaching: Rev. Dr. Michael A. Diaz (he/him/él)  
Liturgists: Rev. BJ Woodworth (he/him)  
Sara Hackett (she/her)  
*Director of Christian Education  
and Youth Ministries*  
Sam Studebaker  
Musicians: Dr. Edward Alan Moore (he/him),  
*Director of Music and Arts*  
ELPC Chancel Choir  
Cody Conley, *violin*  
Brady Conley, *viola*  
Beadle: Liz Hopkins  
Crucifer: Mario Seneca  
Sound: Tim Benedict and Wayne Gaines

#### ◆ WORSHIP FLOWERS

To reflect our spiritual journey of the Lenten season, we bring images of a barren *Wilderness* into the worship space. You are invited to come up to the Chancel at the end of worship, and explore the wilderness scene. *We thank Mario Seneca and the Worship, Music & Arts Committee for this beautiful visual addition to our worship service!*

#### ◆ SUNDAY FELLOWSHIP

Coffee and water are available in the Balaka Room.

#### ◆ SUNDAY WORSHIP

8:45 am.....**Journey Worship.** An interactive, energetic service for those seeking a fresh encounter with the gospel of Jesus Christ.  
11 am.....**Sanctuary Worship.** Our largest service with a multi-cultural congregation and music from organ, piano and choir.

#### ◆ 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 on Mondays

Rev. BJ Woodworth will lead a time on Zoom of 30 minutes of communal silence and guided meditation on scripture.

Mondays, 7:30 to 8 am

Meeting ID: 959 8065 3992

Passcode: bestill

##### Tuesday Morning Zoom Prayer Group

Join Steve Evrard on Zoom for a time of scripture readings, responsive prayer, and interactive dialogue.

Tuesdays, 8 to 8:30 am

Meeting ID: 896 9680 6662 • Passcode: 116

##### 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

## 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, and to stop by either the Highland Ave or Penn Ave entrance to be greeted by an ELPC welcomer.** They will be happy to answer any questions and to offer you more info about our programs, church activities, and volunteer services - and to offer you a small welcoming gift.

Attend an *Inquirers' Class* to learn more about ELPC, Presbyterian theology, and to explore membership. Please see one of the pastors to attend, or contact Jen King for info on future classes (JenK@coh.net; 412.441.3800 x222).

Call the Church Office (412.441.3800), or visit the ELPC website at [www.ELPC.church](http://www.ELPC.church).

## Sunday, 9 March 2025 – First Sunday in Lent

This morning is the first Sunday of the season of Lent, a period of 40 days between Ash Wednesday and Easter. The six Sundays in Lent are not counted in the 40 days. To read more about the season of Lent:

<https://pcusa.org/about-pcusa/agencies-entities/interim-unified-agency/ministry-areas/theology-worship/worship/christian-year/season-lent>

### Prelude

Gerald Near (b. 1942) is a graduate of the University of Michigan, he has held various church positions and is currently a freelance composer and music publisher. *O Maker of the World* is attributed to Pope St. Gregory the Great (540-604). Gregory the Great is depicted in the stained glass window above the organ façade on the west side of the chancel.

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) was a leading English composer whose music was often influenced by folk music and songs. His prelude on the hymn tune *Rhosymedre* is from a set of three preludes for organ on Welsh hymn tunes.

### Special Music

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) composed his first string duo in 1783. This is the first of two duos that Mozart wrote to complete a set of six duos by Michael Haydn for the Archbishop Colloredo. The set of six duos was presented to the Archbishop as having all been composed by Haydn. The Archbishop was unable to “detect in them Mozart’s obvious workmanship.”

### Offertory

The text of *Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days* was written by Claudia Frances (Ibotson) Hernaman (1838-1898) and first published in *The Child’s Book of Praise* (London, 1873). She wrote over 150 hymns, many of which are for children. The text is set to an original melody by Linda Shute in the offertory anthem. It is more commonly sung to the tune ST. FLAVIAN, as it is in our *Glory to God* hymnal, #166.

### Postlude

Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel (1805-1847) was the eldest sister of composer Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy. The siblings shared the same music teacher and Felix said that his sister was a better pianist than he was. Fanny married the Prussian court painter William Hensel in 1829. She wrote over 500 compositions. Her death in May 1847 greatly contributed to her brother’s death in November of that year.

## TODAY AT ELPC

### Lenten Wilderness Display

To reflect our spiritual journey of the Lenten season, we bring images of a barren *Wilderness* into the worship space. You are invited to come up to the Chancel at the end of worship, access a copy of the detailed explanation, and explore the wilderness scene. We thank Mario Seneca and the Worship, Music & Arts Committee for this beautiful visual addition to our worship service!

### Buy a Rainbow Tie-Dyed T-Shirt

ELPC rainbow tie-dyed t-shirts are for sale online through April 6 at <http://tiny.cc/elpcpride> (\$16, credit card required), or in-person after both worship services today (\$15, cash/check only). You can choose short-sleeved and long-sleeved shirt options with sizes ranging from S-4XL. The front of the shirt says *East Liberty Presbyterian Church* and the back says *God created you. God loves you. Be yourself.* Perfect for upcoming June Pittsburgh Pride or for wearing around each day as you share God's love for all in a colorful, stylish way. You will be contacted when the shirts are ready for pick up at the church. For details, please contact Wil Forrest ([Wil@coh.net](mailto:Wil@coh.net); 412.441.3800 x218). *Want to sponsor a shirt for someone else? Contact Wil.*

### Today's Deacons-On-Duty (DODs)

Every Sunday, a DOD (*Deacon-on-Duty*) is available to assist with any emergencies that may occur during our services. The *Journey* service DOD is **Molly Davidson-Welling**. The *Sanctuary* service DOD is **Nate Stephens**. He is seated in the East Transept (Highland Ave entrance).



### Center for Creative Reuse Field Trip for Youth – March 16

On Sunday, March 16 from 12–2:30 pm, youth are meeting for lunch and a field trip to the Center for Creative Reuse—where they will learn about the benefits of reuse for the environment, community, and self. Please contact Sara Hackett to RSVP ([SaraH@coh.net](mailto:SaraH@coh.net)).

### ELPC Connections Potluck Lunch – March 16

The Connections ministry will be hosting a potluck lunch on Sunday, March 16 at 12:15 pm in the Good Samaritan Room (aka the Soul Food room). The lunch is open to everyone at ELPC. Please RSVP online at [bit.ly/4hubZkA](https://bit.ly/4hubZkA) to indicate that you're coming and what food you'll bring. Come join us for a shared meal and a time to get to know one another more deeply.

## Lenten Offerings

Please join us for our gatherings or services during the season of Lent.



### YAM Book Club

The Young Adult Ministry will be reading *Take this Bread* by Sara Miles. Join us today in the Harambe Room after worship to discuss the first 4 chapters. The remaining sessions will be:

- Today and next Sunday, March 16 at 7:30 pm (Zoom),
- March 23 after the 11 am service (Harambe Room),
- March 30 at 7:30 pm (Zoom),
- April 6 at 7:30 pm (Zoom), and
- April 13 after the 11 am service (Harambe Room).

Contact Sara Hackett for the Zoom link ([SaraH@coh.net](mailto:SaraH@coh.net)).

### Lenten LOVE BIG Discussions – Sundays through April 13

Join us during the season of Lent as we use scripture and Rozella Haydée White's book, *Love BIG: The Power of Revolutionary Relationships to Heal the World*, and explore what it means to love God, love ourselves, and love others in ways that truly transform us and the world around us. **Join us on Sundays today through April 13 at either:**

- **9:45-10:45 am** — at Journey with Scripture Adult Church School Class, with Rev. Henk Bossers.
- **12:15-1:30 pm** — after 11 am worship, with Pastor BJ (light refreshments will be provided).

We will have conversations to explore that week's sermon and for those who choose, the companion book, *Love BIG*. You are invited to journey with us—with all your questions, your wounds, and your hopes.

### Living Love: Reading the Bible Queerly – March 11 to April 8

This introductory offering is for anyone seeking to reconcile and affirm one's sexuality with one's faith, as well as those interested in understanding more. This study will be held from 5:30-6:30 pm from March 11 to April 8 in the McKelvy Room in an environment that openly welcomes and celebrates queer people as beloved children of God. Please register to participate at <https://tinyurl.com/ReadingBibleQueerly>.

March 11.....Introductions and Judges 19

March 18.....Genesis 19

March 25.....Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13

April 1.....Romans 1:17- 2:4

April 8.....1 Corinthians 6:9-10

\* *Content Warning: Some of the scriptures will necessitate conversations relating to homophobia, transphobia, misogyny, violence, and sexual assault.*





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

Mike Anderson,  
Becky Boyer's daughter, Dan and Geeg Eash,  
Kelly Kinsey's friends, Eric McCarty's brother Ernest,  
Nicole Molinaro's father, Rhonda Perroz,  
Sam Studebaker, Linda Reneberg and her daughter,  
Tom Sturgill and Torrence Vaughan.

### Committee Meetings This Week

**Finance**.....Tuesday, March 11 @ 5:30 pm  
**Deacons**.....Tuesday, March 11 @ 7:00 pm  
**Worship, Music, Arts**.....Tuesday, March 11 @ 7:30 pm  
**Mission**.....Thursday, March 13 @ 5:30 pm

For more info about how to join a meeting, please contact  
Jen King ([JenK@coh.net](mailto:JenK@coh.net); 412.441.3800 x222).



Please bring your brown paper bags to church during March so that tweens can turn them into wrapping for the *Pittsburgh Prison Book Project*. Drop off bags in the Highland Lobby or on the second floor.

### LGBTQIA+ Ministry's Spiritual Gathering – March 23

You are invited to attend the LGBTQIA+ Ministry's spiritual gathering on Sunday, March 23 at 12:30 pm. Join us to share lunch and conversation. Allies and LGBTQIA+ folks alike are welcome! Contact Wil Forrest ([Wil@coh.net](mailto:Wil@coh.net)).

### PW Retreat at Camp Crestfield – April 4 and 5

Rev Sally Jo Snyder will lead the Presbyterian Women's overnight retreat *For Such a Time as This* at Camp Crestfield on April 4 and 5 as we seek to discern our call in these chaotic times. We will make a joyful noise with singing and worship. We will listen, discuss and learn. We will pray. There will be time to play and rest. For more information, please email [PW.ELPC@gmail.com](mailto:PW.ELPC@gmail.com).



### Donations for Chapel Market

The Chapel Market is in need of **spring/summer clothing** and **full-sized toiletries items** (soap, body wash, toothpaste, toilet paper, toothbrushes, lotion etc.).



Donations can be left at the Highland Lobby, or dropped off at the Chapel Market when open (on the first and third Tuesday of each month from 5–7 pm, or Thursdays from 10 am–12 pm).

In our

## COMMUNITY



### National Faith + Climate Forum – March 27

Join the Environmental Team of the Justice Committee and thousands of others from communities nationwide on Thursday, March 27 from 12–5:30 pm for the National Faith + Climate Forum, presented by Blessed Tomorrow (PCUSA partner). This free, impactful livestreamed forum will include interactive sessions, inspiring keynotes, and practical resources to equip us and our congregation to integrate climate care into our faith practices. Register online at [nationalfaithandclimateforum.org](http://nationalfaithandclimateforum.org).

## • CHURCH TOURS •

### March 16

Penn Hackney will be the guide for a tour of the church's *Stained Glass*.

### April 6

Steve Evrard will guide a *Tower* tour. Please wear closed-toe shoes to join this tour.

*Please gather in the Highland Lobby after the 11 am worship service to join any of our tours.*

### Monthly Taizé Social Gathering – Begins April 2

Beginning Wednesday, April 2, and on the first Wednesday of each month, we will create space for people to connect and fellowship after Taizé with some light refreshments and conversation in the Narthex. Taizé is a unique spiritual community within ELPC, and we desire to have time for those who gather to get to know one another, converse and move from solitude into community and expand the connection that exists amidst our prayerful songs and quiet meditation at Taizé.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES FOR ADULTS

### March 16 ♦ 9:45 to 10:45 am

**Journey with Scripture (Highland Rm+Zoom) – Lenten LOVE BIG: *The Power of Revolutionary Relationships to Heal the World* by Rozella Haydée White book discussion facilitated by Rev. Henk Bossers**

**Seekers (Fellowship Rm+Zoom) – “The True Story of Judas Iscariot by Bishop Spong” video, facilitated by Gwen Puza**

**Soul Food (Good Samaritan Rm+Zoom) – A discussion of chapter 3 of the book, *Necessary Risks* by Teri McDowell Ott, led by The Rev. Joe Hajdu and other class members**