

EAST LIBERTY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

116 S. 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)

EARTH DAY CELEBRATION APRIL 27, 2025 — 11 AM SANCTUARY WORSHIP

TIME OF PREPARATION

The concept of a just transition reimagines power not as domination but as a collaborative and regenerative relationship. It seeks to address the intertwined crises of climate change, environmental injustice and economic inequality. This journey demands a spiritual and moral awakening. We cannot rely on technology alone.

— *“The Power of God: From Extractive Theology to Transformative Faith” (Creation Justice Ministries)*

MUSIC MINISTRY

“Joy” Gerry Niewood
“Big Yellow Taxi” Joni Mitchell
“What A Wonderful World” Bob Thiele, George David Weiss
Mike Tomaro Combo

WELCOME & CHURCH NEWS

Rev. Dr. Michael Diaz

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

Isaac Smith

Leader: Almighty God, we gather in a world that prizes power as dominance.

People: But you call us into a different power—one of self-giving love and humble renewal.

Leader: We join with rivers and mountains, wind and flame, trees and soil in giving praise.

People: We gather not to extract but to be restored, not to conquer but to cooperate.

Leader: Fill us again, O God, with the renewed energy and love.

People: So we may tend to your world in joy and justice. Amen!

* PROCESSIONAL HYMN #14

“For the Beauty of the Earth”

DIX

MOMENTS WITH OUR CHILDREN

Paul Seif

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.*

CALL TO CONFESSION

Nancy Heastings



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

April 27 • 2nd Sunday of Easter

* Indicates where you may rise in body or spirit.

RESPONSIVE PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Nancy Heastings

Leader: Creating God, we thirst for power and not for righteousness.
People: Loving God, renew us.
Leader: We are quick to show our dominance but hide our dependence.
People: Loving God, renew us.
Leader: We take what we want without thought of what we should give back.
People: Loving God, renew us.
Leader: We see your creation as resources, as members of our community.
People: Loving God, renew us.
Leader: We remove mountaintops and clear-cut forests.
People: Loving God, renew us.
Leader: We drill for oil in land that should be protected.
People: Loving God, renew us.
Leader: We drain the earth to fuel our lifestyles.
People: Loving God, renew us. Transform our hearts and minds so that we might justly transform the world that we live in. Amen.

TIME OF SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

Nancy Heastings

Leader: Friends, the God who creates in love has the power to heal, restore, renew and resurrect.
People: In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven and renewed. Thanks be to God.

SPECIAL MUSIC

“Mercy, Mercy Me (The Ecology)”

Marvin Gaye
Mike Tomaro Combo

SCRIPTURE READING

Psalm 104:1, 14-24, 27-30

Isaac Smith

Leader: This is the word of God for the people of God.
People: Thanks be to God.

REFLECTION

Brady Conley

* **HYMN** (*please rise; see insert*) “We are the Problem and the Solution”

SCRIPTURE READING

Revelation 21:1–5

Nancy Heastings

Leader: This is the word of God for the people of God.
People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

“Is Your God Down-to-Earth?”

Rev. Dr. Diaz

TIME OF SILENT REFLECTION

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Nancy Heastings

When prompted by the words, “God of renewal,” please respond with “Hear our prayer.”

RESPONSIVE LORD'S PRAYER (*adapted from “Creation Care Prayers,” Church of England*)

Rev. Dr. Diaz
Brady Conley

Leader: Our Creator in heaven,
People: You are also at home in the air, soil, forests and oceans,
Leader: Hallowed be your name,
People: By the care we take of your creation,
Leader: Your kingdom come,
People: All that you see is good,
Leader: Your will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven,
People: Your will to till and care,
Leader: Give us this day our daily bread,
People: That all may have sufficient to live life in fullness,

Notes regarding the music sung in today's service are 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. 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: Brady Conley, Nancy Heastings

Frances Irvin

Paul Seif

Isaac Smith

Musicians: Dr. Edward Alan Moore (he/him),

Director of Music and Arts

ELPC Chancel Choir

Mike Tomaro Combo:

Mike Tomaro, *Saxes*

Eric Susoeff, *Guitar*

Paul Thompson, *Bass*

Tom Wendt, *Drums*

Beadle: Liz Hopkins

Crucifer: Jan Herzer

Sound: Tim Benedict and Wayne Gaines

◆ WORSHIP FLOWERS

If you would like to sponsor flowers for our weekly worship service in honor or memory of a loved one, please contact Norma (412.441.3800 x211). The cost is \$250.

◆ SUNDAY WORSHIP

No worship services next Sunday, May 4, due to the route of the Pittsburgh Marathon.

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 the Highland 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* **TODAY** in the McKelvy Room after the 11 am service to learn more about ELPC, Presbyterian theology, and to explore membership. See Pastor Michael Diaz 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.

TODAY AT ELPC

Welcome Visitors!

Please stop by the Highland 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.

Earth Day Services

This morning we celebrate caring for creation at our worship services.

Inquirers Class

Attend an Inquirers' Class after today's 11 am service to learn more about ELPC, Presbyterian theology, and to explore membership. Lunch will be provided. Please see Pastor Michael Diaz after the service if you are interested in attending today's gathering.

Tool Drive for GCF

As part of ELPC's celebration of Earth Day, the Neighbors Committee is sponsoring a *Tool Drive* for Garfield Community Farm (GCF). You can view GCF's wish list and sign up to donate new or gently used items at tiny.cc/gcf-tool-drive. A representative from GCF will be here after the 11 am service to provide more info.

Church Tour

Jo Ellen Aleshire will lead a *Sanctuary and Chapel* tour today. Gather in the Highland Lobby after the 11 am service.

Pittsburgh Marathon Donations for OHM

Sixteen members and friends are participating in the *Run for a Reason* program to support mission partner Open Hand Ministries (OHM) in the Pittsburgh Marathon. Help them reach their fundraising goals at <https://tinyurl.com/OHM-PGHmarathon>, or scan this QR code. Donations accepted through May 31.



Labyrinth Available

For decades the Labyrinth at ELPC has been a vital and creative spiritual path for our church and neighbors and during the pandemic we had to suspend its weekly offering. It will be available again on:

Wednesdays and Thursdays
(starting Wednesday, May 7)
10 am—7 pm
in McKelvy Room

Notice: Phishing Scam

If you receive an email from Pastor Michael Diaz or any ELPC church employees requesting that you contact them to chat or to take care of a sensitive or financial matter, please disregard it. Our staff will NEVER contact you with an email with such requests. The actual email address of the sender will also be a clue that the email is not valid.

No Worship Services on Marathon Sunday – May 4

Due to the route of the Pittsburgh Marathon, ELPC will not have any worship services on Sunday, May 4.

PW Bible Study – May 5 and 6

Presbyterian Women's 2024-2025 Bible Study *Let Justice Roll Down Like Waters: Sustaining Creation's Health for All* will meet on Monday, May 5 from 7–8:30 pm (on Zoom), and on Tuesday, May 6 from 10 am–Noon (hybrid). There will be a potluck lunch after Tuesday's Bible Study. Please bring a dish to share; beverages will be provided. For more info and Zoom link, please email PW.ELPC@gmail.com.

Hope Academy's Recital Schedule – May 8, 11 and 15

- Thursday, May 8 at 6 pm — *Sing and Dance Recital* with Shana Simmons Dance in the Social Hall
- Sunday, May 11 at 1:30 pm — *Music Recital* in the Sanctuary
- Thursday, May 15 at 6 pm — *PBT Dance Recital* in the Social Hall

Garden Crew Work Day – May 10

If you enjoy outside yard work, and want to help clean up the church grounds, please join Don Breitbarth and the Garden Crew on Saturday, May 10. Work begins at 9 am, and typically goes until Noon. Please bring garden gloves. Please contact Don Breitbarth for more info (412.225.7649; don.breitbarth@gmail.com).

Children and Family Event – May 11

The next family event is volunteering at Garfield Community Farm on Sunday, May 11. The Children and Families Ministry team is hosting monthly family events to foster a caring community of families at ELPC, where kids and adults feel loved and empowered to explore their faith.

Pastor Michael's Installation Service – May 18

All are invited to the installation service of Rev. Dr. Michael Diaz on Sunday, May 18 at 3 pm in the Sanctuary, when the Pittsburgh Presbytery will officially install him as Senior Pastor of ELPC. A *Pittsburgh Cookie Table Reception* will follow the service in the Fellowship and Garth Overlook Rooms. If you want to donate your favorite cookies (sweet or savory) to the reception and/or help with setup/cleanup, contact Jen King (JenK@coh.net; 412.441.3800 x222).



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

- Adelaide and Liam, Amanda, Harvey, Jean,
 Jon and all struggling combat veterans, Miriam, Rachel,
 Sandy Blackburn, Edward Copeland,
 Nicholas Genger-Boeldt, Ahmad Ghaznavi,
 Joe Kennedy, Suzan Krauland, Barbara Lockie-Brown,
 Tricia Mire, Brenda Nalubega, Lisa Petrilli,
 Judy Winstead Foster, and Pastor BJ Woodworth.
- Condolences to **Brandy Berner** on her grandmother's passing.
- Condolences to **Janet Pollard** on a family member's passing.
- Condolences to **Jason Van Ness** on his grandfather's passing.

Committee Meetings This Week

- Peace** Today @ Noon
Faith Formation Tuesday, April 29 @ 6:00 pm
Children & Family Wednesday, April 30 @ 1:00 pm
- For more info about how to join a meeting, please contact
 Jen King (JenK@coh.net; 412.441.3800 x222).

Alternative Transportation Challenge – May 18

Transportation is one of the largest contributors to carbon emissions and plays a crucial role in ensuring equitable access to services and opportunities for all communities. The Environmental Team of the Justice Committee would like to challenge the ELPC congregation to consider lowering its transportation carbon footprint. We can make an impact by working together to care for God's creation.

Join the challenge on Sunday, May 18 if you are able, to get to ELPC by biking, walking, running, carpooling, using public transportation, or driving a hybrid or electric vehicle. Secure indoor bicycle parking will be available in the Harambe Room. Information will be available after worship services on Sundays, April 27 and May 11 to assist you in making a plan!

On Sunday, May 18 we will gather data as people arrive, and report on the total carbon emissions saved compared to single occupancy gas vehicles. Members with electric vehicles will be present after both services to demonstrate and provide information. Contact Nancy Heastings for more info (n.heastings@comcast.net).

Tower Tour – May 25

Please join guide Steve Evrard for a tour of the tower on Sunday, May 25. Wear closed-toe shoes to participate, and gather in the Highland Lobby after the 11 am sanctuary worship service to join the tour.



In our

COMMUNITY



Pittsburgh Mayoral Candidate Forum – April 29

The *Pittsburgh Mayoral Candidate Forum* will be held on Tuesday, April 29 from 6-8 pm at Pittsburgh Playhouse of Point Park University (350 Forbes Ave, 15222). A reception begins at 5:15 pm. All four official candidates will participate in two separate forums: Republicans Tony Moreno and Thomas West; and Democrats Ed Gainey and Corey O'Connor.

Last Day to Vote – May 5

Please note the last day to register to vote or to make changes (such as address) is May 5.

Court of Common Pleas Candidate Event – May 8

Hear about the experiences and views of the 22 candidates competing for 8 seats on the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas on Thursday, May 8 at Rodef Shalom Congregation (4905 Fifth Ave). A light dinner will be held at 5:30 pm; the event begins at 6:30 pm.

EECM Food Drive – May 10

EECM will be having a *Food Drive* on Saturday, May 10 from 9 am-1 pm (6125 Harvard Street, 15206). Please visit eecm.org for a list of requested items and more info.

Pittsburgh Pride 2025 March and Festival – June 1

Save the date for the Pittsburgh Pride 2025 March and Festival on Sunday, June 1 at Noon. Demonstrate God's love and justice for all people with your church family!

Vacation Church School – Volunteers Needed

Student registration is currently full, BUT please email Sara Hackett (SaraH@coh.net) if you would like to have your child added to the waitlist. Volunteers are still needed for Vacation Church School at ELPC on June 23-27 from 9 am-3 pm. Our theme this summer is LIVE it OUT: Discover How to Love like Jesus! Teens in 6th-12th grade and adult volunteers are needed; register at ELPC.church.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES FOR ADULTS

May 11 ♦ 9:45 to 10:45 am

Journey with Scripture (Highland Rm+Zoom) – Lectionary scriptural passages, facilitated by Rev. Henk Bossers

Seekers (Fellowship Rm+Zoom) – “What is Religion?” with Karen Armstrong, facilitated by Gwen Puza

Soul Food (Good Samaritan Rm+Zoom) – A discussion of chapter 8 of *Necessary Risks* by Teri McDowell Ott, led by Rev. Joe Hajdu and other class members