



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)

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

MAY 25, 2025 — 11 AM SANCTUARY WORSHIP

TIME OF PREPARATION

How great the love God has for you, no words could ever express. You are God’s beloved, secure in the care of a love that never sleeps, where sorrow cannot steal your peace.

— Choctaw Elder Steven Charleston

MUSIC MINISTRY

“Prelude in D-flat Major, Op. 19, No. 1”

John Knowles Paine
Dr. Edward Alan Moore, *organ*

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

Rebecca Reiner

Leader: May God be gracious to us; may God bless us.

People: We gather in worship, knowing God is here.

Leader: May God’s face radiantly shine upon us.

People: May God call us into the joyful work of creating peace.

Leader: Let us worship our God in praise.

People: We lift our hearts in hope, trusting that joy rises again and again. Alleluia!

* PROCESSIONAL HYMN #157

“I Danced in the Morning”

LORD OF THE DANCE

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.*

CALL TO CONFESSION

Rebecca Reiner

Leader: Before healing begins, there is truth-telling. Before we can rise, we must be honest about what holds us down. Let us confess where we have chosen comfort over courage, rules over relationship, and silence over compassion. Let us pray:

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

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RESPONSIVE PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Rebecca Reiner

Leader: Merciful God, you ask us if we desire to be made well.
People: We acknowledge we do not always know how to answer.
Leader: We have grown used to systems that keep people waiting by healing waters.
People: Forgive us when we prioritize policies over people.
Leader: We have turned away from those you would have us lift up.
People: Forgive us when we choose order over healing and reputation over risk.
Leader: Turn us again toward your mercy, O God,
People: That we might rise, take up our mats, and journey in the way of compassion.

TIME OF SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

Rebecca Reiner

Leader: Friends, grace finds us wherever we are.
People: In the name of Jesus, we are forgiven. Amen.

HYMN OF RESPONSE #471 (*sing 3x*) "The Lord Is My Song"

HEAR MY PRAYER

SCRIPTURE READING

Psalm 67 (NRSV)

Andrew Wilkinson

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

SCRIPTURE READING

John 5:1-10 (*Inclusive Bible*)

Rebecca Reiner

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

* **HYMN #375** "Shall We Gather at the River"

HANSON PLACE

SERMON "A Mat, a Miracle, and a Misunderstanding"

Rev. Dr. Diaz

TIME OF SILENT REFLECTION

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION & THE LORD'S PRAYER

Andrew Wilkinson

When prompted by the words, "Lord, send out your Spirit," please respond with
"Come renew the face of the earth."

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

SHARING GOD'S PEACE

Rev. Dr. Diaz

Leader: La paz de Cristo esté con ustedes. The peace of Christ be with you.
People: Y también contigo. And also with you.

OFFERING INVITATION

Rev. Dr. Diaz

Thanks to everyone who has made a pledge for 2025. Your timely giving to fulfill your pledge helps us fulfill our mission to show God's unconditional love to all.

Please remember to write your name on your offering envelope. You can also scan this QR code to give online or visit www.ELPC.church/donate.



* Indicates where you may rise in body or spirit.

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

“Down by the Riverside”

arr. Rollo Dilworth

War, no more. Study war, no! War no more!

Ain't gonna study war no more.

Gonna lay down my burden, down by the riverside.

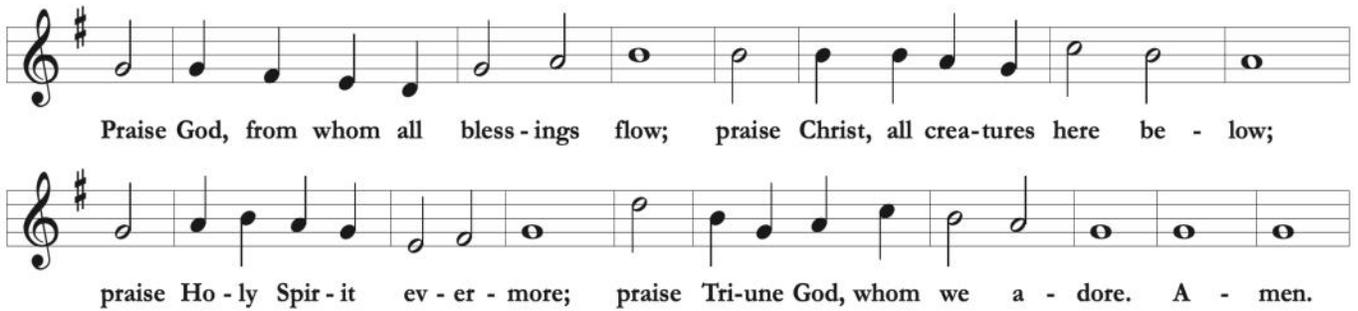
I ain't gonna study war no more.

Gonna lay down my sword and shield, down by the riverside.

I ain't gonna study war no more

* **DOXOLOGY AT THE PRESENTATION #607**

OLD HUNDREDTH



Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise Christ, all crea - tures here be - low;
praise Ho - ly Spir - it ev - er - more; praise Tri - une God, whom we a - dore. A - men.

* **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING & DEDICATION**

Rev. Dr. Diaz

Leader: El Señor esté con ustedes.

The Lord be with you.

People: Y también contigo.

And also with you.

Leader: Levantemos nuestros corazones.

Lift up your hearts.

People: Lo tenemos levantado al Señor.

We lift them to the Lord.

Leader: Demos gracias al Señor nuestro Dios.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: Es justo dar gracias y alabanzas a Dios.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Leader: Glorious God, everything that is given to us rains forth out of the abundance of your love. Bless these gifts and our lives as we glory in your presence. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

* **RECESSIONAL HYMN #81**

“Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken”

AUSTRIAN HYMN

* **CHARGE & BENEDICTION**

Rev. Dr. Diaz

POSTLUDE

“Postlude in C Major”

Arthur Foote
Dr. Moore, *organ*



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.

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: Sara Hackett (she/her)

*Director of Christian Education
and Youth Ministries*

Rebecca Reiner

Andrew Wilkinson

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

Director of Music and Arts

ELPC Chancel Choir

Beadle: Jo Ellen Aleshire

Crucifer: Tim Engelhardt

Sound: Tim Benedict

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

We begin our summer worship schedule next Sunday, June 1. We will have one combined service at 10 am on Sundays in the Sanctuary. Due to necessary repairs, we will not worship in the Courtyard this summer.

10 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

Labyrinth Prayer Walk

A 35-foot floor mat with curved paths leading inward; an ancient tool for walking and seated meditation.

Wednesdays and Thursdays

10 am to 7 pm

◆ WEEKLY SPIRITUAL LIFE OFFERINGS

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 **sign 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* on **Sunday, June 8 after the 10 am service** to learn more about ELPC, Presbyterian theology, and to explore membership. See Pastor Michael Diaz to attend, or contact Jen King to register or for info (JenK@coh.net; 412.441.3800 x222).

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

Sunday, 25 May 2025 – Sixth Sunday of Easter

Today is the sixth Sunday of the season of Easter. The season of Easter lasts seven weeks from Easter Sunday to Pentecost Sunday on June 8.

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

Prelude

John Knowles Paine (1839-1906) was appointed Harvard University's first organist and choirmaster in 1861. He was one of the *Boston Six* group of composers, a group of six composers based in Boston in the late 19th and early 20th centuries who helped establish the American school of composition that would distinguish it from the European school to which they were all descendants of. The members, along with Paine, Arthur Foote (1853–1937), George Chadwick (1854–1931), Amy Beach (1867–1944), Edward MacDowell (1861–1908), and Horatio Parker (1863–1919).

Offertory

Composer Rollo Dilworth's (b. 1970) arrangement of the spiritual *Down by the Riverside* was commissioned by the Cincinnati Children's choir and published in 2016. Dilworth was born in St. Louis, Missouri and studied at Case Western Reserve in Cleveland, Ohio and the University of Missouri-St. Louis, and Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. Since 2009 Dr. Dilworth has been a faculty member in the Boyer College of Music and Dance at Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Postlude

Arthur Foote (1853-1937) was a composer and organist at First Unitarian Church in Boston. Along with John Knowles Paine, he was a founder of the American Guild of Organists. A graduate of Harvard, he was a member of the *Boston Six*. (see prelude notes)

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.

Tower Tour

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



New Book Study: A Children's Bible – May 29

The Environmental Team of the Justice Committee has selected *A Children's Bible* by Lydia Millet for their next book study. Lydia Millet's prophetic and heartbreaking story of generational divide offers a haunting vision of what awaits us on the far side that might overwhelm us.

The book discussion will be held on Thursday, May 29 at 7 pm in the Fellowship Room and on Zoom. For more info, contact Nancy Heastings (n.heastings@comcast.net).

Vacation Church School – Volunteers Needed

We are still looking for a few more volunteers for VCS from June 23-27 from 9 am to 3 pm, especially in the afternoon with some very fun kids! If you are interested or want to learn more reach out to Sara Hackett (SaraH@coh.net) or fill out the online volunteer form at tiny.cc/vcs.

Can't help during the day at VCS but still want to help? You can: save and drop off your paper grocery bags; donate a side salad for volunteers' lunch (pasta, lettuce, fruit salads); help wash t-shirts and sheets (pick them up at ELPC and bring them back clean); or mix up dough for dog treats (kids are going to roll, cut, bake and decorate).



INQUIRERS CLASS

Sunday, June 8

Attend an Inquirers' Class after the 10 am service on Sunday, June 8 to learn more about ELPC, Presbyterian theology, and to explore membership. Lunch will be provided.

Register online using this QR code, or visit elpc.church/visit-us/becoming-a-member.

Please contact Jen King for more info:

(JenK@coh.net; 412.441.3800 x222)



Summer Worship Schedule

Begins next Sunday, June 1

Our summer worship schedule begins next Sunday with a combined service at

10 am in Sanctuary

Due to necessary repairs, we will not worship in the Courtyard this summer.



Church Tours – June 8 and 22

All are welcome to join our church tours. Scheduled tours for June are:

- ♦ June 8 — *Sanctuary and Chapel* led by Jo Ellen Aleshire
- ♦ June 22 — *Tower* led by Tim Van Fleet and Steve Evrard (*please wear closed-toe shoes for this tour*)

Please gather in the Highland Lobby after the 10 am Sunday worship service to participate.

Reckoning with ELPC's Tie to Enslavement – June 29

In 2022, our church family learned that one of our most revered founders and donors enslaved and sold two women, Nell and Poll, in the early 1800s.

Join the Facing Systemic Racism Committee after the 10 am service in the Social Hall on Sunday, June 29 for a presentation on what we have learned about Nell, Poll, and their family, and for a time of discussion and reflection on what we must do to reckon with this part of our church's legacy. A light lunch will be provided.

Alternative Transportation Challenge Update from Last Week

The Environmental Team of the Justice Committee would like to thank all who participated in the challenge last Sunday to lower our transportation carbon footprint!

Of the 231 people completing the May 18 transportation survey, 54 changed the way they typically travel to ELPC, and 135 were already using one of these lower CO2 emissions methods. **Travel methods used were: biking (19); walking (31); public transit (17); electric vehicle (13 people in 8 cars); hybrid vehicle (35 people in 18 cars); gas vehicle (116 people in 74 cars).** In addition, 67 people completed an alternate challenge.

Without more detailed data about how every individual typically travels to ELPC, we were not able to calculate exact CO2 emissions savings. **We did calculate that compared to single-occupant gas cars, our CO2 emissions on May 18 were lower by about 3/4 ton of CO2, the equivalent of 76 gallons of gasoline burned, or 11 trees planted and grown for 10 years.**

We can make an impact by working together to care for God's creation, and help reverse inequities caused by climate change.



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

- Jean, Jon and struggling combat veterans,
- Linda, Matthew, Miriam, Rachel, Rudo,
- Sandrina and children, Sandy Blackburn,
- Carol Chontos' friend Sally, Ahmad Ghaznavi,
- Joe Kennedy, Barbara Lockie-Brown,
- Gail Mallory's cousin Rose, Tricia Mire, Lisa Petrilli,
- Michael Stapleton, and Pastor BJ Woodworth.

Committee Meetings This Week

Justice..... Wednesday, May 28 @ 5:30 pm
Neighbors Wednesday, May 28 @ 6:00 pm

The church will be closed on:

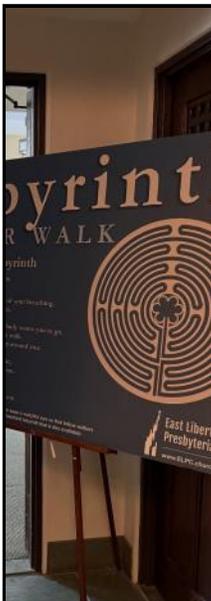
**Monday, May 26 for Memorial Day and
Thursday, June 19 for Juneteenth.**

Middle School Camp at Crestfield – July 20 to 25

Youth in grades 6–8 are invited to attend *Service Adventure Camp* from July 20 to 25, which combines Crestfield adventure with local missions and service opportunities. Campers will be sent out to local non-profits to learn about and assist those agencies, then swim or rest. After dinner, there will be canoeing, ninja walling, archery, Big Friz, and more! Youth from multiple churches around Pittsburgh will be working and playing together this week at camp. The cost is \$400 and scholarships are available. Contact Sara Hackett (SaraH@coh.net).

Tuesday Morning Zoom Prayer Group

ELPC offers an online prayer group each Tuesday morning from 8-8:30 am, hosted by ELPC member Steve Evrard. These 20-minute sessions feature scripture readings, responsive prayer, and interactive dialogue. All are welcome at this opportunity for fellowship and prayer. The Zoom Meeting ID is 896 9680 6662 (passcode is 116), or you may call in by dialing 929.205.6099.



Labyrinth Prayer Walk

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 is available on:

**Wednesdays and Thursdays
10 am—7 pm in McKelvy Room**
(with the exception of June 11, 12, 19, 25, 26)

Volunteers Needed

We need 3 to 6 more people on our team to help with the set up and teardown of the labyrinth.

Set up happens on Wednesdays from 9-10 am; teardown is Fridays from 9-10 am.

In our

COMMUNITY



Pittsburgh Pride 2025 March and Festival – June 1

Our congregation is a proud participant in LAMP – LGBTQIA+ Affirming Ministries of Pittsburgh. While there are many Pride events sponsored by different groups in different neighborhoods around the area, the ONE big Pride event ELPC and LAMP will be participating in this year is *Pittsburgh Pride March and Festival* on Sunday, June 1.



The March will begin at noon on Liberty Ave, concluding at Allegheny Commons Park West where the Festival will take place. Sign up to volunteer at the booth on Sunday, June 1 (both lay and pastoral volunteers) at <https://tinyurl.com/PrideBooth2025>, or by scanning this QR code. More info is available in the Highland Lobby.



Come out and celebrate while we share God's love with all God's people!

Juneteenth Parade – June 21

ELPC has had a presence in the *Juneteenth Parade* and this year is no exception! Please join us on Saturday, June 21 at 10 am. If you would like to walk or ride in the church van, let us know (space is limited). For info or to sign up, please contact Lenore Williams (LeeFabilli@aol.com).



RCC Concert – June 27 and 28

The Renaissance City Choir, Pittsburgh's LGBTQIA+ choir, presents its annual Pride Concert: #THIS IS ME on Friday, June 27 and Saturday, June 28 at 7:30 pm. The new location for this 40th anniversary concert is Point Park University's Pittsburgh Playhouse (350 Forbes Ave, downtown) with reserved seating. Come for a much needed refill of hope and celebration with songs like *Chosen Family, People Like Us, and Stand Up!* For in-person and live-stream tickets, please visit www.rccpittsburgh.com. RCC rehearses at ELPC.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES FOR ADULTS

Our Adult Sunday School classes will resume on Rally Day in September.