

Weekly Worship Schedule

Journey Service
Sundays | 8:45 am

Sanctuary Service
Sundays | 11 am

Taizé Prayer Service
Wednesdays | 7 pm

Pastor Michael's Installation Service



All are invited to the installation service of the Rev. Dr. Michael Diaz on **Sunday, May 18**, 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 would like to donate your favorite cookies (sweet or savory) to the reception and/or if you are able to assist with setup/cleanup, contact Jen King at JenK@coh.net or 412.441.2800 x222.

May Worship Notes

- As a reminder, there will be no services or Church School on **Sunday, May 4**, due to the route of the Pittsburgh Marathon.
- Elder and deacon ordinations and installations will take place during Sanctuary worship on **Sunday, May 11**, and Journey worship on **Sunday, May 18**.
- We also will receive new members during Sanctuary worship on **Sunday, May 18**.

Youth Sunday Worship

We want to feature youth voices, gifts, and ideas—as well as honor our graduating high school students—in worship on **Sunday, May 18**. Middle and high school students can join us for a worship planning meeting on **Tuesday, May 6**, 6:30–8 pm. You also can also help by talking to Sara about what you are interested in helping plan and/or lead between now and May 6. Some ways you can get involved include playing an instrument, reading Scripture, writing a prayer, leading the Moment with the Children, or choosing the hymns that we sing.



Calling All Grads

Are you graduating from high school, college, trade school, graduate school, etc. this spring? We would like to celebrate these achievements together! Submit your name, degree, and school attended to Jen King at JenK@coh.net or 412.441.3800 x222 by May 12.





**East Liberty
Presbyterian Church**

www.ELPC.church

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Staff Leadership

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Pastoral Message

The Rev. Dr. Michael A. Diaz, Senior Pastor



Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord!"—John 20:18

Friends, these last few weeks as we journeyed out of Lent and into Easter were unforgettable. I am thankful for the many volunteers who made holy space for people to encounter God during an emotional Holy Week and a joyful Easter Sunday. We celebrated with tears and laughter and with confetti and cascarones. We also remembered Mary Magdalene, the Tower, who stayed in

her grief long enough to hear the Risen Christ speak her name just outside the tomb. She didn't rush to fix her sorrow. She stayed with it. And the Risen Christ met her there.

This month, I invite you to do the same. Let the month of May be a season of staying—staying connected, staying open, staying ready to be surprised by resurrection hope. Even though, we will not have worship services on May 4, many of us will be cheering our members who are participating in the Pittsburgh Marathon, raising money for many of our community partners who serve our neighbors in need. On the following Sundays, we will be ordaining and affirming our new Elders and Deacons, receiving new members and friends in the church, and celebrating our youth in worship.

People of God, the resurrection was never meant to be a one-day celebration. It's a way of life, a refusal to allow death and injustice have the last word. Resurrection is a bold declaration that love still rises. As we worship, serve, and live out our callings, I hope you'll keep your eyes open for holy moments in ordinary places. Spread joy. Fight for justice. Carry confetti in your pockets and courage in your spiritual bones. Lift up those around you by speaking their names with tender love, and let's make resurrection real in our world.

May it be so.

Session News

In April, Session held a joint meeting with the Deacon Board where incoming deacons were examined and enthusiastically affirmed. Session also passed a recommendation from the Property Committee to discontinue the use of the Garth for summer worship due to safety hazards and needed repairs. Additionally, Session approved a policy to NOT allow ICE or Homeland Security access to ELPC unless required by law or a valid judicial warrant.

Spiritual Life

The Rev. BJ Woodworth

Covenant Pastor for Spiritual Life, Taizé, and Transitional Ministries

Resurrecting the ELPC Labyrinth Ministry

Beginning on **Wednesday, May 7**, we will be resurrecting our Labyrinth Ministry at ELPC. And now you'll be able to use the Labyrinth on Wednesdays and Thursdays, 10 am–7 pm, in the McKelvy Room.

The Labyrinth Ministry has been a staple Spiritual Life offering since 1996—almost 30 years at ELPC. It was one of the first churches in the Pittsburgh region to develop a Labyrinth Ministry. It had become an integral part of our diverse, multicultural congregation, and it serves as a bridge for reaching seekers and friends of all faiths.

During the pandemic, it was discontinued. Over the past few years, I have received multiple inquiries each month from friends and members of ELPC, neighbors and residents of Pittsburgh far and wide, asking when it would be regularly open again. The Spiritual Life Committee discerned that we should seek to resurrect it and have it run by a ministry team. I was overwhelmed by the response and interest.



Thanks be to God, we have 12 people who will be doing the work to set up our Labyrinth and tear it down every week. Thanks to Reed Williams, Sandi Miller, Susan Wadsworth-Booth, Emily Rosenthal, Abby Ritter, Rebecca Serey, Tania Nunn, Steph Raufer, Donna Carr, Steve Massey, Martha Mannix, and John Buckley for their willingness to serve in this capacity.

If you are not familiar with the Labyrinth, it is an ancient, sacred symbol found in many religious traditions throughout the world. During the Middle Ages, Labyrinths were prominent in numerous cathedrals in Europe, where Christians walked floor labyrinths or traced their fingers along the carved ridges of wall Labyrinths. For medieval Christians, the Labyrinth was a symbolic pilgrimage: instead of taking a costly and dangerous pilgrimage to Jerusalem, worshipers made a symbolic journey on a cathedral Labyrinth. Today, modern pilgrims, across many spiritual traditions, walk the Labyrinth as one of many ways to pray and meditate. The winding path into the center and back out again is a metaphor for the journeys of life and faith. Unlike a maze, which has many paths and is a puzzle to solve, the Labyrinth is a single path in and a single path out and is designed to quiet the mind for prayer and meditation.

We hope you will come on Wednesdays or Thursdays, between 10 am and 7 pm, to enjoy some quiet space to reflect, meditate, pray, and simply be. Please also spread the word among your neighbors, friends, and co-workers that they too may come and walk/pray the Labyrinth and find a place of respite and reflection.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "BJ Woodworth". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Garden Crew

If you enjoy outside yard work, and want to help clean up our church grounds, join Don Breitbarth and the Garden Crew on **Saturday, May 10**. Work begins at 9 am, and typically goes until noon. Any time you can help would be appreciated! Please bring garden gloves.

Contact Don for more information at don.breitbarth@gmail.com, or **412.225.7649**.



Juneteenth Parade

ELPC has had a presence in the Juneteenth Parade and this year is no exception! Join us on **Saturday, June 21**, 10 am. If you would like to walk or ride in the church van, let us know (space is limited).

For information or to sign up, contact Lenore Williams at LeeFabilli@aol.com.



Christian Education

Note: Adult classes meet on Sundays, 9:45am.

Nursery for Kids up to Age 3

Our Nursery is now staffed on Sundays, 8:30 am-12:30 pm. Children sing songs, hear stories, and engage in play to learn about God's love.

Children Age 4–Grade 3

Children are invited to *Sunday School: Sacred Stories for Kids* after the Moments with our Children in the Sanctuary (11:15 am). Using the Godly Play curriculum, kids hear, see, touch, and retell the sacred stories of our faith while asking "I wonder ..." questions and responding with art. Children also pray, sing, and share a simple snack.

Parents pick up their kids after worship in Room 206.

Tweens in Grades 4–6

Youth are invited to *Sunday School: Sacred Stories for Tweens* after the Moments with our Children in the Sanctuary (11:15 am). Tweens dig into Bible stories through games, conversations, crafts, drama, and teamwork to discover what these stories mean to them in today's world.

Parents pick up their kids after worship in Room 207.

New Mom's Group

Are you a mom of a new baby (ages birth–2) and looking to get connected with other moms at church? Come as you are as we meet up for the first time on **Tuesday, May 13**, 11:30 am. We will meet in the church Nursery, for a casual time of fellowship. Text Bethany Bray at **610.680.7357** for more details.

Journey with Scripture | Highland Room & Zoom

Facilitators: Rev. Henk Bossers and other class members | SaraH@coh.net

We will continue to honor the PC(USA) Lectionary Scriptural Passages while also using Rozell' Haydee White's book, *Love Big: The Power of Revolutionary Relationships to Heal the World*, for our inspiration. Join us.

Seekers | Garth Overlook Room & Zoom

Facilitator: Gwen Puza | gpuza9@gmail.com

May 11: What is Religion?

Karen Armstrong is considered one of the world's most thought-provoking and original public thinkers on the role of religion in historical and contemporary life. In this video, she discusses how the concept of religion evolved during history, belief, myth vs. literalism, and commitment to God.

May 18: The Lost Art of Scripture: Rescuing the Sacred Texts

In this video, Karen Armstrong discusses how scripture and church teachings in all religions try to use words to describe an undefinable God, and how we cannot know God by using words.

May 25: The Prophets as Change Agents

In this video from Chautauqua Institute, Bishop John Spong elaborates on the stories of biblical prophets Hosea, Amos, Jonah, and Malachi, and explains how these men had unique and intimate relationships with God that led to a transformation in the way believers read the Hebrew Scriptures.

Soul Food | Good Samaritan Room & Zoom

Facilitators: Rev. Joe Hajdu and other class members | hajdub625@comcast.net

This month, we will be concluding our discussion of *Necessary Risks*, by Teri McDowell Ott, with the final three chapters.

May 11: Chapter 8, Risk Speaking

May 18: Chapter 9, Risk Failing

May 25: Chapter 10, Risk Succeeding

Thank You to Our Sunday School Teachers!

Make sure you check out the new children's Bibles in the Sanctuary pews this month given in honor of this year's Children and Youth Sunday School teachers.

A huge THANK YOU to our amazing teachers: Sherry Anderson, Bruce Bancroft, Patricia Bancroft, Bethany Bray, Annie Cowan, Linda Davis, Sandy Edgcombe, Jim Eng, Carol Hoehn, Liz Hopkins, Joshua Lawrence, Heather Lawrence, Nancy Magee, Hannah Moon, Jan Pressman, Paul Seif, and Grace Taylor.

These teachers' creativity and passion for sharing God's sacred stories with our children is a gift to us all!

Children, Youth, & Young Adult Ministries

Happening this Summer

Talk to Sara Hackett for more information on these events or additional scholarship opportunities.

July 20–25: Middle School Service Adventure Camp at Crestfield

Youth in grades 6–8 are invited to attend Service Adventure Camp, which combines Crestfield adventure with local missions and service opportunities. During the day, campers will be sent out to local non-profits to learn about and assist those agencies. Back at camp in the late afternoon, campers can chill at the pool or take a much needed FOB (flat on bunk). 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.



July 13–19: Trinity Youth Conference

Trinity Youth Conference is a regional Presbyterian conference for youth who have completed grade 9 through college-aged students in Shellsburg, Pennsylvania. The week consists of meaningful workshops, camp games, relevant worship, refreshingly honest small groups, and is planned and led by a youth planning team. ELPC's own Shayla Brigido is a member of this

year's planning team. Information about cost, workshops, registration and schedule can be found online at trinityyouthconference.com.

July 28–31: Presbyterian Youth Triennium

Teens are invited to join over 1,000 Presbyterian teens from around the world as we worship, learn, fellowship, and play as a hopeful and joyful community of faith at the 2025 Presbyterian Youth Triennium in Louisville, Kentucky. The experience will be one of those life-shaping faith forming events that you will never forget! It will be *As If We Were Dreaming*.

The conference will be held at the Louisville Convention Center and we will be staying at a local hotel. Students who have completed grades 8–12 are invited to attend as part of the Pittsburgh Presbytery delegation.



Getting to Work at Garfield Community Farm

Families are invited to join us after worship on **Sunday, May 11**, 12:15–2 pm, to volunteer at Garfield Community Farm. Lunch will be provided at the farm - please bring a water bottle filled with water. Tools and gloves will be provided.



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.

Youth Group

Youth Group for students in grades 7–12 meets weekly on Thursday nights from 4:30–7 pm. Reach out to Sara Hackett at SaraH@coh.net with any questions.

May 1: We will enjoy games, dinner, and discussion together.

May 8: We will have a cook out on our last “regular” youth group of the program year.

May 15: Join us to see the much discussed and anticipated musical, *Into The Woods*, at Colfax.

Club 116

Kids in grades 1–6 are invited to **Club 116**, our midweek youth group ministry, on Wednesdays, 4:30–6:30 pm. We have Bible study, crafts, games in the gym, and dinner together!

Our last day of **Club 116** this year will be on **Wednesday, May 14**. Join us for our year-end party!

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

For Such a Time as This Retreat Recap

Neither April showers nor a closed bridge detoured Presbyterian Women from their Spring Retreat at Camp Crestfield in Slippery Rock.

The Rev. Sally Jo Snyder led worship and a discussion of women of courage. Linda Sanders led music and we made a “joyful noise.” Grace Taylor helped us “rise and shine” Saturday morning with a meditation.



We will return to Camp Crestfield March 20–21, 2026. Save the dates!

Presbyterian Women Bible Study

Let Justice Roll Down: Sustaining Creation’s Health for All
Monday, May 5 7–8:30 pm (Zoom Only)
Tuesday, May 6 10 am–12 pm (Hybrid)



Too often, the Western world separates human culture from nature. Scripture and science bear witness otherwise. Psalm 104, for example, celebrates God’s unified creation. Humans share the Earth with the many species that inhabit this creation. By contrast, this whole ecosystem is disrupted by removing an Appalachian mountaintop in West Virginia. Forests and birds disappear. Streams are polluted with toxins and heavy metals that leach from the exposed rock. Human lives and livelihoods are disrupted, never to return.

Tuesday morning Bible Study will meet online and in the Fellowship Room. The in-person study will be followed by a potluck lunch. Please bring a dish to share; beverages will be provided.

Email PW.ELPC@gmail.com for more information and the Zoom link.

LGBTQIA+ Ministry

Wil Forrest, Coordinator of LGBTQ Ministry

Spiritual Gathering

All are invited to attend our LGBTQIA+ Ministry’s next Spiritual Gathering on **Sunday, May 18, 12:30 pm**. Join us to share lunch and conversation. Allies and LGBTQIA+ folks alike are welcome!

Questions? Please contact Wil Forrest at wil@coh.net or **412.441.3800 x218**. A Zoom option will be offered only if expressed need is shared with Wil prior to the Friday before the gathering.



God Created You. God Loves You. Be Yourself.



Alternative Transportation Challenge

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**, and come 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 services on Sunday, May 11, to assist you in making a plan!

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 at n.heastings@comcast.net for more information.

Divestitures of Top Polluting Companies

Acting on a recommendation from the Justice Committee's Environmental Team, the Centennial Fund in April approved nine additional fossil-fuel company divestitures from the fund. The move followed months of discussion with members of the Environmental Team's Divestment sub-committee, whose work has been guided by principles laid out by the General Assembly of the PC(USA) and the Presbyterian Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment.

New Book Study: A Children's Bible



For their next book, the Environmental Team of the Justice Committee has selected *A Children's Bible* by Lydia Millet. This 2020 short fiction book is full of twists and turns.

A Children's Bible follows a group of 12 eerily mature children on a forced vacation with their families at a sprawling lakeside mansion. Contemptuous of their parents, the children decide to run away when a destructive storm descends on the summer estate, embarking on a dangerous foray into the apocalyptic chaos outside. As the scenes of devastation begin to

mimic events in the dog-eared picture Bible carried around by her beloved little brother, Eve, the main character devotes herself to keeping him safe from harm.

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.

We will discuss the book on **Thursday, May 29**, 7 pm, in the Fellowship Room and on Zoom. For further information and the Zoom link, contact Nancy Heastings at n.heastings@comcast.net.

"Do Justice," Love Kindness, and Walk Humbly with Your God

What do these words from Micah 6:8 mean for ELPC? This is your chance to answer that call.

Would you like to be part of providing assistance to refugee and immigrant families in our community, accompany people to appointments, help with household shopping, or simply be a friendly face and listening ear?

Work with our Immigration Team.

Would you like to investigate ways to reduce energy consumption, support environmentally responsible legislation, or advocate for climate justice?

Work with our Environmental Team.

Are you called to stand up for LGBTQIA+ rights, reach out to those in our city who are struggling for gender-affirming healthcare, support Trans and Non-binary folk at a time when they are being demonized by Christian Nationalism? **This is the time!**

These are issues that the Justice Committee faces and acts on. You could be part of making decisions on where and how we put our time and efforts. The Justice Committee meets by Zoom on the fourth Wednesday of every month. Contact Carol Chonoska at carolchonoska@gmail.com for more details on how you can participate.

ELPC People

If you have news to share, contact Jen King at JenK@coh.net or 412.441.3800 x222.

Prayers

We offer our prayers of comfort to

- Brandy Berner and her family after the recent loss of her grandmother.
- Janet Pollard who is grieving due to the death of a family member.
- Jason Van Ness who is grieving the loss of his grandfather.

“...inviting all to join our diverse, inclusive family of faith, transcending boundaries of race, class, ability, culture, age, gender and sexual identity to become one in Christ.”

Witness to God’s Love at Pittsburgh Pride 2025

For over 20 years ELPC has taken to the streets to be a witness to God’s love for all God’s people at Pittsburgh Pride. This year, make sure your voice is heard and your love is felt as you join with folks from ELPC and other inclusive churches to march on **Sunday, June 1**, 12 pm. Look for more details about marching (from the Strip to the Northside) and/or volunteering at the ELPC/LAMP booth at Allegheny Commons Park West.

Contact Wil Forrest at Wil@coh.net to get involved.

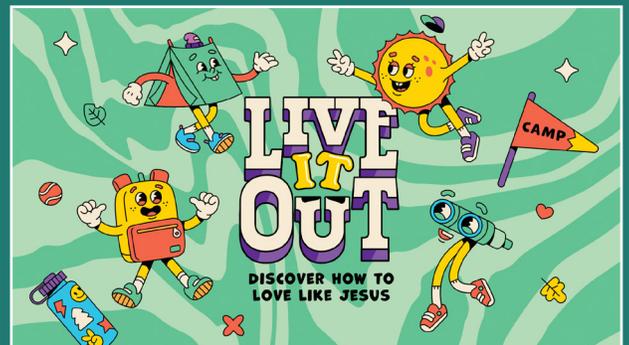


VCS Volunteers Needed

Vacation Church School at ELPC will be held **Monday–Friday, June 23–27**, 9 am–3 pm. Our theme this summer is **LIVE it OUT: Discover How to Love Like Jesus!**

Youth in grades 6–12 (under 18 years old) and adults are needed to serve as volunteers to help make our Vacation Church School program a success. We need folks who can serve all week and even those who can spare just three hours.

Volunteers can register online at tiny.cc/vcs.



Student registration is currently full. Email Sara Hackett at SaraH@coh.net to be added to the waitlist.