



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)

REFORMATION SUNDAY OCTOBER 26, 2025 — 11 AM SANCTUARY WORSHIP

TIME OF PREPARATION

Community is another source of grace. In community we are meant to grace one another; to be sources of grace; healers by way of grace. — Matthew Fox

PRELUDE

“Prelude on Rhosymedre”

Ralph Vaughan Williams
Dr. Edward Alan Moore, *organ*
Palmer Shonk, *bagpipes*

“Selections for Bagpipes”

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

Trish and Mabel Buben

Leader: As the church reformed, God calls us to be renewed by the living Word of God.

People: **God’s Spirit is still speaking, calling us from pride to humility, from walls to welcome.**

Leader: The gospel is a living grace written on human hearts.

People: **We gather to be reshaped, renewed, and restored.**

Leader: Come, let us worship the God who is reforming us through love.

People: **Thanks be to God, our refuge, our reformer, our redeemer. Amen!**

* PROCESSIONAL HYMN #320

“The Church of Christ in Every Age”

WAREHAM

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 go to Sunday School: Sacred Stories. Parents pick up their kids after worship (age 4- 3rd grade in Room 206; grades 4-6 in Room 207). If this is your child's first time attending, please accompany your child upstairs and check in with the teachers.*
- *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 (adapted from Presbyterian Outlook)

Trish and Mabel Buben

Leader: Our God is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. Let us open ourselves in this time of prayer, being truthful in our confession as we humble ourselves before our God.

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

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UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Trish and Mabel Buben

Holy God, your truth is so often sharp and unsettling. We confess the ways we skirt the hard edges of your Word, turn up the volume on lesser noises, and lean into the comfort of our own certainty rather than submit to the discomfort of your challenge. Again and again, Holy God, we resist what we do not want to hear. Yet you keep calling. Have mercy on us. Interrupt our evasions. Soften what pride has hardened in us. Help us receive your truth. Amen.

TIME OF SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

Trish and Mabel Buben

Leader: Friends, God's grace is always present.

People: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Amen.

HYMN OF RESPONSE #70

"What Does the Lord Require of You?"

MOON

We will start singing part 1 together. The choir will then add part 2 and then part 3. As we continue singing, you are welcome to sing any part you like.

SCRIPTURE READING

Romans 3:21-23 (*Common English Bible*)

Mabel Buben

Leader: This is the word of God for the people of God.

People: Thanks be to God.

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 18:9-14 (*adapted from Inclusive Bible*)

Trish Buben

Leader: This is the word of God for the people of God.

People: Thanks be to God.

* HYMN #282

"Come Down, O Love Divine"

DOWN AMPNEY

SERMON

"*Semper Reformanda: Grace Still Reforms Us*"

Rev. Dr. Diaz

TIME OF SILENT REFLECTION

VIDEO

Prayer from Thomas Merton

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Presentation of Daniel Scott Willus

People: We do! We celebrate you as God's beloved. We promise to pray with you, to listen and learn with you, to cultivate the gifts within you, to journey with you in times of joy and challenge, and to join you in God's work of love and liberation. Together, we are the body of Christ!

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. 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

“O How Amiable”

Ralph Vaughan Williams
Text from Psalms 84 and 90

*O how amiable are thy dwellings, thou Lord of hosts!
My soul hath a desire and longing to enter into the courts of the Lord.
My heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.
Yea, the sparrow hath found her a house and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young:
Even thy altars, O Lord of hosts, my King, and my God.
Blessed are they that dwell in thy house. They will be always praising thee.
The glorious majesty of the Lord our God be upon us;
Prosper thou the work of our hands upon us. O prosper thou our handiwork.
O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come, our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home.*

* **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:	Holy One, as you once reformed your church by the power of your Spirit, so reform us now through the grace of giving. Let these offerings become your promise of renewal and your mercy made visible in the world. May healing rise, justice flourish, and every soul know they are beloved in your presence! Amen.	

* **RECESSIONAL HYMN #275**

“A Mighty Fortress Is Our God”

EIN’ FESTE BURG

*This Reformation hymn was in the top ten in our favorite hymns survey.
Read more about it in this week’s worship notes: <http://tiny.cc/elpcworshipnotes>*

* **CHARGE & BLESSING**

Rev. Dr. Diaz

* **POSTLUDE**

“Highland Cathedral”

arr. James Wetherald

Please remain standing until the bagpiper has recessed down the center aisle.



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. 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 Diaz (he/him/él)
- Liturgists: Trish and Mabel Buben
Sara Hackett (she/her)
- Musicians: Dr. Edward Alan Moore (he/him)
Director of Music and Arts
ELPC Chancel Choir
Palmer Shonk, *Bagpiper*
- Beadle: Jo Ellen Aleshire
- Crucifer: Jan Herzer
- 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, contact Norma (412.441.3800 x211). The cost is \$250.

◆ 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

Cathedral Yoga

Yamuna will lead yoga in-person in the Sanctuary.

Wednesdays, 6 to 7 pm (before Taizé)

Journey Dance

Enjoy an evening of healthy, energizing, funky and divine dancing on the 3rd Friday of every month

3rd Friday of month, 7 to 8:30 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** in each pew.

Attend an *Inquirers' Class* on Saturday, Nov 8 from 10 am-Noon in the Fellowship Room to learn more about ELPC, Presbyterian theology, and to explore membership. Please see one of the pastors to attend, or contact Jen King for more 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.

Sunday, 26 October 2025 – Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost – Reformation Sunday

Presbyterians celebrate the tradition that grounds their faith on Reformation Sunday. It is always the last Sunday in October, marking the occasion in 1517 when Martin Luther posted his 95 theses on the church door in Wittenberg, Germany. In Scotland, the Protestant Reformation was led by the great reformer, John Knox (1514-1572).

<https://pcusa.org/historical-society/history-online/history/reformation-sunday>

Prelude

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.

Offertory

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) originally composed *O How Amiable* with military band accompaniment, later arranging it for organ. Based on texts from Psalms 84 and 90, it closes with the first verse of *O God Our Help in Ages Past*.

Recessional Hymn

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

No hymn is identified with the Protestant Reformation more than Martin Luther's *A Mighty Fortress*. Luther (1483-1546) left a body of congregational songs that both defined the Lutheran confessional tradition and became truly ecumenical in influence.

The story of Luther's reforming movement is widely known. A Roman Catholic monk, his study led him to believe that the Church of Rome was corrupt. On October 31, 1517, he posted his famous 95 theses on the door of the church at Wittenberg, inviting debate. Luther broke with Rome in 1521, refusing to retract his writings before the Diet of Worms. Subsequently, he was recognized as the leader of the German Reformation.

This hymn was in the top ten in our favorite hymns survey.

For further reading: <https://lutheranreformation.org/history/a-mighty-fortress/>

Postlude

Highland Cathedral has been a popular bagpipe tune since it was composed by German musicians Ulrich Roever and Michael Korbin in 1982 for a Highland games in Germany.

REFORMATION SUNDAY: OCTOBER 26

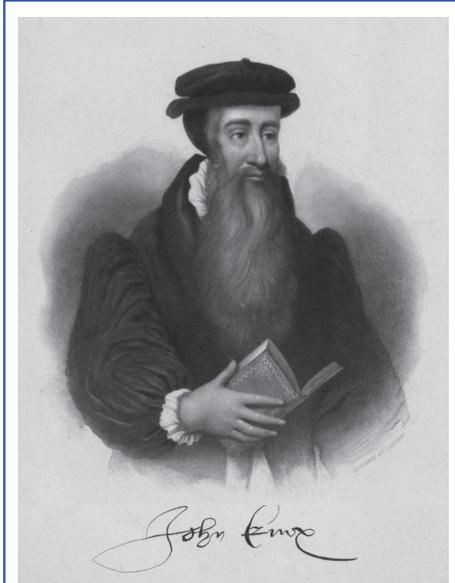
John
Knox

THE REFORMER
OF SCOTLAND

Knox preaching in Old St. Giles Cathedral

In Scotland, the Protestant Reformation was led by the great reformer, **John Knox (1514-1572)**. During his life in the 16th century, Knox was a tutor, a galley slave to the French, a royal chaplain of King Edward VI, a sword-wielding bodyguard, a scholar and writer, and a preacher of fiery sermons at Old St. Giles in Edinburgh. He was a leading figure in the Scottish Reformation, during which time Protestants fought for religious freedom in countries ruled by the Catholic faith. Knox instilled in his fellow countrymen the duty to oppose unfair government to bring about moral and spiritual change.

In 1559, the leading group of the Reformation movement, the Lords of the Congregation, militarily occupied various cities, including Perth and Edinburgh, where they elected Knox



Portrait of John Knox, 1842

minister of St. Giles Cathedral. Later that year, after hearing Knox's Thanksgiving sermon, the Lords of the Congregation asked Knox and his colleagues to write a confession of faith. They obliged, and four days later offered up The First Book of Discipline of the Scots Confession. The Confession was adopted by Parliament in 1560 and remained the Scottish churches' official theological doctrine until 1647, when it was superseded by the Westminster Confession.

The adoption of the Scots Confession did not mean total freedom—rather, the return of the Catholic Mary Queen of Scots in 1561 erected a few more roadblocks for the emerging Reformation. But the flames of the movement had caught, and John Knox's influence continued to spread by and large as the Reformation forever changed the Scottish landscape.

 **PRESBYTERIAN**
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
The National Archives of the PC(USA) 

For more Reformation Sunday resources visit
www.pcusa.org/rs

TODAY AT ELPC

Welcome Visitors!

If you are joining us for the first time, we're glad you are here! Please do not forget to write your name and contact info in the RED friendship book in your pew. Pastor Michael will reach out to you for any prayer requests and to answer any questions you might have.

Reparations Session

Following today's 11 am service, the Facing Systemic Racism Committee will facilitate a *Reparations Session* that builds from the powerful telling of Nell and Poll's story into meaningful next steps for ELPC. The event will combine reflection, shared learning, and community dialogue. This session will begin with refreshments in the Social Hall after worship.

Tower Tour

A tower tour will be held today. The tour capacity is limited to a total of 20 participants. Even though pre-registration was required, there may still be room to participate. Please go to the Highland Lobby after the service to see if there is room for more. Please allow 45-60 minutes for the tour, and wear closed-toe shoes.

Cathedral Concert: Fox Chapel High School

At 3 pm today, the Fox Chapel High School Chorus & Orchestra will perform in the Sanctuary. Led by Ben Murray, choral director, and Mairi Cooper, orchestra director, the concert will feature *Illuminare* for string orchestra, piano, and choir by Elaine Hagenberg.



The concert is free, and will also be livestreamed on YouTube and Facebook. For more information on the 2025-26 *Cathedral Concerts* series, please visit tiny.cc/cathedral-concerts.



New Covenant Pastor for Connection and Care

The Session and Temporary Associate Pastor Nominating Committee of ELPC are pleased to announce that our new Covenant Pastor for Connection and Care is Rev. Sarah Robbins! More info can be found at tiny.cc/pastor-sarah. On Nov 2, join us for a reception in the Fellowship and Garth Overlook Rooms to welcome Rev. Robbins!

Officer Nominating Forms Available

The Officer Nominating Committee invites members to share their gifts—and to lift up the gifts of others—as they seek nominees for the offices of Elder, Deacon, and next year's Nominating Committee. Guidelines and nomination forms are in the church mail room, and on our website.

Justice League for Kids — Wednesdays through Nov 19

Youth in grades 3–6 and teen volunteers are invited to join our new *Justice League* on Wednesdays through Nov 19 from 5–7 pm for dinner and do a service project. Contact Sara Hackett for info (SaraH@coh.net).

Book Study Series — Begins Oct 29

Join Pastors BJ and Michael on Wednesdays from Oct 29 to Nov 19 from 5:30–7 pm in the Good Samaritan Room for a four-week journey utilizing Marcus Borg's influential book, *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time. Together*.

We'll explore Jesus as: *Spirit Person* (a man deeply connected to the sacred); *Teacher of Wisdom* (offering timeless guidance for life today); *Social Prophet* (challenging systems of injustice); *Movement Founder* (inspiring a community of transformation).

Each session will blend teaching, scripture, conversation, and spiritual practices, creating space not just to learn about Jesus, but to experience his presence anew.

We'll share dinner together at 6:30 pm, and you're invited to stay for our contemplative Taizé prayer service at 7 pm. To register, visit: tiny.cc/meeting-jesus-again

Remembrance of Those Who Have Passed Away — Nov 2

As part of our All Saints' Day service at the 11 am service on Sunday, Nov 2, we will remember those in our congregation and larger church family who have passed away since Nov 2024. Send the names and passing dates of extended friends and family to Norma in the church office (412.441.3800 x211) by Monday, Oct 27.

Rides to Help You Vote — Nov 2 and 4

The Voting Team of the Justice Committee is organizing rides.

- *Mail In Drop Box Site — Sunday, Nov 2:* After the 11 am worship service and social time for the new associate pastor, we will load up at the South Highland Ave entrance and go to the Drop Box site at Homewood CCAC to turn in our ballots. Please reserve a space so we can plan cars.
- *Election Polls — Tuesday, Nov 4:* For those needing transportation to vote in person on Nov 4, we need to collect your address information.

The Voting Team will be stationed at both services TODAY in the Highland Ave hallway with clipboards to collect the information. Voting is our super power. Contact Nancy Heatings (n.heatings@comcast).

No Taizé or Yoga — Nov 26

On Wednesday, Nov 26 (*the day before Thanksgiving*), there will be no Taizé service, nor Cathedral Yoga at ELPC.



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

Amber, David, Heidi's sibling John, John, Lisabeth's son Paul, Ned's aunts Lynda and Judy, Sam, Tim Engelhardt's mother Cecilia, Chuck Lukehart, and Gary Rabideau's friend Matt.

Condolences to

Ryan Booher on his grandmother's passing.

Condolences to the family of

Rev. Carol Noel Seaman on her passing.

NO Committee Meetings This Week

PW Bible Study – Nov 3 and 4

Presbyterian Women's bible study will meet on Monday, Nov 3 from 7-8:30 pm (online only), and on Tuesday, Nov 4 from 10 am-Noon (hybrid) in the Fellowship Room. Tuesday's 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 info and the Zoom link.

LGBTQIA+ Ministry Spiritual Gathering – Nov 9

All are invited to the next monthly spiritual gathering of the LGBTQIA+ Ministry on Sunday, Nov 9 at 12:30 pm when we will share conversation and lunch. Allies and LGBTQIA+ folks alike welcome! Contact Wil Forrest, LGBTQIA+ Ministry Coordinator, for more details or to attend (Wil@coh.net; 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.



Food Drive – Nov 16

The Neighbors Committee invites you to participate in a Food Drive for East End Cooperative Ministry's Food Pantry with non-perishable foods to distribute to those in our community who are in need. On Nov 16, bring your food donations to worship. You also can drop off your donations in the Highland lobby prior to Nov 16.

Suggested items: brown rice, whole grain pastas, instant potatoes, boxed mac and cheese, low-sodium soups and broth, low sugar canned fruits and vegetables, canned tomato paste and sauce, canned tuna, high-fiber breakfast cereals, pancake mix and syrup, brownie mix, peanut butter, jelly, baking soda, bags of dried beans, and unsalted nuts and seeds.

Health Ministry Seeking New Members – Nov 16

The ELPC Board of Deacons is looking to restart its Health Ministry after taking a year off. Anyone who might be interested (Deacon or non Deacon) in exploring potential new activities for this ministry is invited to a meeting on Sunday, Nov 16 at 12:30 pm in the Highland Room. RSVP to Tom Sturgill (sturgillpgh@yahoo.com).

IN OUR COMMUNITY

Domestic Violence Hotline

Domestic violence is a crisis that touches every community. Our faith calls us to stand with survivors, speak truth about harm, and create spaces of safety and healing. No one should ever suffer in silence or in fear. If you or someone you know is experiencing abuse, speak confidentially with a pastor or trusted leader, or call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 800.799.7233.

Amen to Action – Nov 15

On Saturday, Nov 15 from 8 am–12 pm, participate in *Amen to Action* at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. With other volunteers from local congregations and nonprofits, we will pack 100,000 meals to be delivered to our neighbors in need by the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. Register at tiny.cc/amen-to-action.

ELPC Annual Fall Pie Festival – Nov 23

The Spiritual Life Committee invites you our annual Fall Pie Festival on Sunday, Nov 23 after the 11 am worship service in the Fellowship and Garth Overlook Rooms. You are invited to bring your favorite pie (sweet or savory) to share with the congregation. Please join us for a time of celebrating the fall harvest and anticipation of the arrival of the holiday seasons.



Sign-up to bring a pie at tiny.cc/pie-festival, or look for sign-up sheets at the Sunday worship services in November.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES

November 2

– Adults –

Adult classes are held from 9:45-10:45 am in the rooms indicated:

Journey with Scripture – Highland Room + Zoom

Facilitated by Rev. Henk Bossers

Seekers – Garth Overlook Room + Zoom

“The President of Foreman Christian College in Lahore, Pakistan” by Dr. Jonathan Addleton. Facilitated by Gwen Puza

Soul Food – Good Samaritan Room + Zoom

A discussion of *So You Want to Talk About Race* by Ijeoma Oluo. Facilitated by Rev. Joe Hajdu and other class members

– Children –

Kids leave worship during Moments With Our Children. Parents pick up their children after worship in the rooms indicated below:

Children (age 4-grade 3) – Room 206

Tweens (grades 4–6) – Room 207

Teens (grades 7-12) – meets the 1st and 3rd Sunday of month