



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)

4TH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

FEBRUARY 1, 2026 • 11 AM SANCTUARY WORSHIP

TIME OF PREPARATION

What then is meekness? It is to live in self-surrender to God, free from the sense of *me* and *mine*.

— Swami Prabhavananda

PRELUDE

“Adagio in A”
“Liebster Jesu, Wir Sind Hier, BWV 731”
(Blessed Jesus, We Are Here)

César Franck
Johann Sebastian Bach
based on GtG #395

WELCOME & CHURCH NEWS

Rev. Dr. Michael Diaz, 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

Kate Lindholm

Leader: Let us draw near into the presence of God,
People: We come seeking to serve God with faithfulness.
Leader: Draw near, seeking to be pure in heart and mind.
People: We come seeking to be true to God’s purposes.
Leader: Let us draw near into the presence of God.
People: We come as we are to worship God!

* PROCESSIONAL HYMN #839

“Blessed Assurance, Jesus Is Mine”

ASSURANCE

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

Rev. Sarah Robbins

Leader: Jesus climbs the mountain and speaks words that turn the world upside down: Blessed are the poor in spirit. Blessed are the grieving, the gentle, the persecuted, those hungry for justice. Yet we confess the difficulty in living out these truths. We chase comfort and ease, being the most successful and the best. We chase power instead of sharing it. So let us come honestly before God, trusting not in our perfection, but in God’s transforming grace. Let us pray.

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

* Indicates where you may rise in body or spirit.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(in unison)*

Rev. Robbins

Wise and loving God, we confess that we do not always see ourselves clearly or love others as deeply as you do. We overlook the poor in spirit, resist the work of peace, and turn away from suffering. Clear our vision from false loyalties, prejudice, and the deceits of power. Teach us wisdom and grant us courage to become foolish for love and to hunger for your justice. Transform us and lead us again in the way of Jesus.

TIME OF SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

Rev. Robbins

Leader: Friends, God's grace meets us in the midst of our struggle.

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

HYMN OF RESPONSE #840 *(vs. 1 only)*

VILLE DU HAVRE

“When Peace like a River”

READING

from “This Here Flesh” by Cole Arthur Riley

Rev. Woodworth

There is no greater exhaustion than a charade of spirituality. A life that is holy is a life that allows for all of your uncertainties, your curiosities and unbelief. That doesn't just allow for them but holds them as sacred. Spirituality that is not permitted these liberties is merely subjugation. It is not in protection of the divine; it is in protection of fragile people who are unable to allow spiritual freedoms without their own spirituality feeling threatened. It's a spirituality that is terrified of meditation for fear of resembling another faith tradition. It's a spirituality that spends more time on apologetics than conversation and telling stories. To be liberated spiritually...is to become spiritual creatives.

Leader: May God bless the truth in these words.

People: **Amen.**

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 5:1-12 *(Inclusive Bible)*

Kate Lindholm

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

People: **Thanks be to God.**

* **HYMN #731**

“Give Thanks for Those Whose Faith Is Firm”

REPTON

SERMON

“Blessed is an Honest Faith”

Rev. Dr. Diaz

TIME OF SILENT REFLECTION

SHARING GOD'S PEACE

Rev. Woodworth

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. Woodworth

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.



OFFERTORY ANTHEM

“Prayer for Unity”

Jeffrey H. Rickard

Based on *Finlandia* by Jean Sibelius

This is my song, O God of all the nations, a song of peace for lands afar and mine; this is my home, the country where my heart is; here are my hopes, my dreams, my holy shrine: But other hearts in other lands are beating with hopes and dreams as true and high as mine.

We are created children of God's love, sisters and brothers of God's own dear son; descend, O Holy Spirit, like a dove into our hearts, that we may be as one: As one with you, to whom we ever tend: As one with Christ, our brother and our friend.

We would be one in hatred of all wrong, one in our love of all things true and fair, one with our joy that breaks forth into song, one with our pain that quiets into prayer, one in the power that makes your children free to follow truth and serve you faithfully.

* Indicates where you may rise in body or spirit.

This is my prayer, O Lord of all earth's kingdoms: Your kingdom come, on earth your will be done. Let Christ be lifted up till all shall serve him, and hearts united learn to live as one. O bear my prayer, great God of all the nations: myself I give; now let your will be done.

* 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.

— THE LORD'S SUPPER —

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Rev. Robbins

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Rev. Robbins, Rev. Woodworth

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 up 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.

THE LORD'S PRAYER *(in the language or version closest to your heart)*

Rev. Dr. Diaz

The Lord's Prayer can be found on pg. 35 (English), on pg. 40 (Español), or on pg. 45 (Ἕλ-κρ-οῦ) in the hymnal.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Rev. Robbins, Rev. Woodworth

SHARING BREAD & CUP

Rev. Dr. Diaz

The communion elements are gluten-free bread and grape juice. The congregation is invited to come forward by using the center aisle to the communion servers where each may receive the bread and the cup, then returning to their seats via the side aisles. Those seated in the East Transept (the section near the Highland Entrance) will be directed by an usher to the walkway between the front and back section and will file in behind those in the first row of the back section. Those not able to come forward will be served in their seats. Please raise your hand and/or make eye contact with the roaming Communion server.

COMMUNION HYMNS

#508

"Come to the Table"

COME TO THE TABLE

#495

"Thee We Adore, O Hidden Savior, Thee"

ADORO TE DEVOTE

PRAYER OF DEDICATION *(in unison)*

Rev. Woodworth

Creator of all good things, you have fed us with the bread of life and cup of blessing, small in their presentation, yet magnificent in our holy imagination. May Christ accompany us on our journey ahead. Amen.

* RECESSIONAL HYMN #804

"Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart!"

MARION

* CHARGE & BLESSING

Rev. Dr. Diaz

POSTLUDE

"Fugue on the Carillon of Soissons Cathedral"

Maurice Duruflé

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

<http://tiny.cc/elpcworshipnotes>

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: Rev. Sarah Robbins (she/they)
Rev. BJ Woodworth (he/him)
Sara Hackett (she/her)
Kate Lindholm
Musicians: Dr. Edward Alan Moore (he/him)
Director of Music and Arts
ELPC Chancel Choir
Handbells: Ryan Booher, Keith Irvin
Jonah Koetke, Mark Statler
Beadles: Tim Engelhardt
Laura Ristau
Crucifer: Jason Van Ness
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 visit tiny.cc/SundayFlowers, or call Norma (412.441.3800 x211). The cost is \$260. Reserve your date at least one week before the Sunday you wish to sponsor the flowers.

◆ SUNDAY WORSHIP

8:45 am.....**Journey Worship (now in the Chapel).**
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

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.

If you're a first time visitor, please fill out a **NEW HERE** card found in the pew backs and give that card to a pastor at the Penn Ave or Highland Ave entrance to receive a gift in exchange for your filled out card. Our pastors will reach out to you for any prayer requests and to answer any questions you might have.

Attend an *Inquirers' Class* **TODAY after the 11 am service in the McKelvy Room** to learn more about ELPC, Presbyterian theology, and to explore membership. Please see a pastor to attend today.

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

Sunday, 1 February 2026 – Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

The Sundays after Epiphany are also referred to as Ordinary Time. Ordinary Time in the church year is divided in two sections, the first being between Epiphany and Ash Wednesday and the second between Pentecost and Advent. The liturgical color for the season is green.

Prelude

The chorale tune *Liebster Jesu, wir sind hier* was composed by Johann Rudolph Ahle (1625-1673). Ahle was an organist and composer from Mühlhausen, Germany.

Processional Hymn

Blessed Assurance was written in 1873 by blind hymn writer Fanny Crosby (1820-1915). Crosby had been visiting her friend Phoebe Knapp (1839-1908) who had just composed a new melody. She played it for Crosby and asked her what the tune said, to which Crosby replied “Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine.”

Offertory Anthem

Prayer for Unity

This is my song, O God of all the nations, a song of peace for lands afar and mine;
This is my home, the country where my heart is;
Here are my hopes, my dreams, my holy shrine:
But other hearts in other lands are beating with hopes and dreams as true and high as mine.

We are created children of God’s love, sisters and brothers of God’s own dear son;
Descend, O Holy Spirit, like a dove into our hearts, that we may be as one:
As one with you, to whom we ever tend: As one with Christ, our brother and our friend.

We would be one in hatred of all wrong, one in our love of all things true and fair,
One with our joy that breaks forth into song, one with our pain that quiets into prayer,
One in the power that makes your children free to follow truth and serve you faithfully.

This is my prayer, O Lord of all earth’s kingdoms:
Your kingdom come, on earth your will be done.
Let Christ be lifted up till all shall serve him, and hearts united learn to live as one.
O hear my prayer, great God of all the nations: myself I give; now let your will be done.

Postlude

Maurice Duruflé’s (1902-1986) *Fugue on the Carillon of Soissons Cathedral* was published in 1962. Duruflé was a meticulous composer, constantly revising his music, which resulted in a smaller output of compositions than many of his contemporaries. This perfectionism resulted in pieces of the highest quality, which are held in high regard in the organ literature. One of his shorter pieces for the organ, this fugue is an example of this highly refined compositional style.

TODAY AT ELPC

Welcome Visitors!

If you are joining us for the first time, we're glad you are here! Please fill out a **NEW HERE** card found in the pew backs and give that card to a pastor at the Penn Ave or Highland Ave entrance. You will receive a gift in exchange for your filled out card. Our pastors will reach out to you for any prayer requests and to answer any questions you might have.

Inquirers Class

Attend an Inquirers' Class today after the 11 am Sanctuary worship service in the McKelvy Room. Learn more about ELPC, Presbyterian theology, and to explore membership. Lunch will be provided. Please see one of the Pastors if you are interested in joining them. Please contact Jen King for more info on future classes (JenK@coh.net; 412.441.3800 x222).

Hope Academy Teaching Artists to Perform

The *Cathedral Concerts* series at ELPC continues at 3 pm today in the Sanctuary with a performance by Hope Academy Teaching Artists, under the direction of Anqwenique Kinsel.



The concert is free and open to all. Invite your family and friends! A freewill offering will be received.

For more details, visit tiny.cc/cathedral-concerts.



Pray Always in All Ways Weekly Gatherings – Wednesdays

Have you ever wondered what prayer is or if you even believe in prayer? Have you ever longed to pray more but struggled to know how? Together we will talk about our struggles and hopes with prayer and explore a wide variety of prayer forms, including body prayer, prayer beads, icons, silence, and prayer as simple awareness in life. Join us on 4 Wednesdays (Feb 4 and 11) at ELPC from 5:30-7 pm in the Good Samaritan Room. Register online at <https://tinyurl.com/PrayAlwaysClasses2026>, or by scanning this QR code.



Journey Service in the Chapel

Please note our 8:45 am *Journey* worship service is now held in the chapel to allow us to have a space for children and a more intimate space to worship. Unfortunately, we will not be able to broadcast the service via Zoom or on social media just yet.

Step Into the Story of Nell and Poll Exhibit – Begins Feb 1

As we recognize Black History Month, ELPC's Facing Systemic Racism, Spiritual Life, and Worship, Music, and the Arts Committees invite you to a storywalk on the lives of Nell and Poll, members of a family enslaved and sold by two of our early founders. This unique self-guided experience in the Trustees Room will include six stations that trace significant milestones and moments in the lives of Nell and Poll.

Visitors moving through the storywalk will encounter powerful images paired with prayers, guided meditations, poetry, and reflections designed to deepen their understanding and spark contemplation. This is more than an exhibit—it's an opportunity to pause, pray, and engage with narratives that challenge and inspire.

After completing the walk, visitors will be prompted to share their impressions in a journal. Those thoughts and reflections will help us continue our congregational conversation about faith, art, and the work of dismantling systemic racism. Come and experience this sacred space of learning and reflection.

The storywalk will be available in February:

Tuesdays through Fridays from 9 am-8 pm

Saturdays and Sundays from 9 am-3 pm

PW Bible Study – Feb 2 only

Presbyterian Women's bible study will meet on Monday, Feb 2 from 7-8:30 pm (online only). The Tuesday, Feb 3 hybrid gathering has been cancelled. Email PW.ELPC@gmail.com for more info and the Zoom link.

Active Intruder Safety Training – Feb 7

ELPC's Safety and Security Advisory Committee invites everyone to attend an important training session on Saturday, Feb 7 from 1-4 pm at ELPC concerning how to remain safe if an intruder enters the church building. There will be a local safety officer who will share helpful information and answer our questions.

Pre-register at <https://forms.office.com/r/j6aTkreA1T>, or contact Jen King (412.441.3800 x222).

PA Against the Death Penalty Postcard Campaign – Feb 8

Join the effort to pass legislation that will finally abolish the death penalty in PA. On Sunday, Feb 8 after the 11 am worship service, come to the Garth Overlook Room to sign postcards that will be delivered to the Harrisburg offices of the Governor, Attorney General, District Attorney, State representatives and Senators. Contact Vivienne Selia (vselia@comcast.net). This event will be held in conjunction with a *Social Hour*.



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

Linda Benedict, Ida C's brother,
 Andrea DeVries' mom Elaine, Mike Held,
 Mike Hellman, Peggy Hodge, Kathy K's neighbor David,
 Kate L's cousin Michael, Chuck Lukehart,
 Jennifer M's father Karle, Chris Markwell,
 Ida & Tagi, and PTS DMin students.

Committee Meetings This Week

FSR.....Tuesday, Feb 3 @ 6:00 pm
Property.....Tuesday, Feb 3 @ 7:00 pm

Social Hour – Feb 8

The Justice Committee will host a *Social Hour* on Sunday, Feb 8 after the 11 am service in the Fellowship Room. Please note a *Social Hour* will be held on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month.

LGBTQIA+ Ministry Spiritual Gathering – Feb 8

All are invited to the monthly spiritual gathering of the LGBTQIA+ Ministry at 12:30 pm on Sunday, Feb 8 for conversation and lunch. Allies and LGBTQIA+ folks welcome! Contact Wil Forrest, LGBTQIA+ Ministry Coordinator, to attend (Wil@coh.net; 412.441.3800 x218).

Ash Wednesday Services – Feb 18

A season for reflection, repentance, and remembering the good news that holds us, Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, Feb 18. We will have a reflective service of word and prayer in the Chapel at Noon, and an evening service in the Sanctuary at 7 pm. *Both services include the imposition of ashes.*

Annual Congregational Meeting – Feb 22

The annual *Congregational Meeting* will take place on Sunday, Feb 22 following our Sanctuary worship service in the Social Hall. All official members of the church are invited to participate and vote for new candidates for Elder and Deacon for this coming year. Refreshments will be served. The annual report will be available on Sunday, Feb 15.

Celebrating Black History Month
 African American Leaders
 in the PC(USA)



DR. EMILY VERA GIBBES (1915–2004) was a Presbyterian educator, administrator, missionary, and pioneering leader in women's ministry whose life bridged faith, education, and global service.



Born in Harlem, New York, Emily grew up on Strivers Row in a vibrant Black upper-middle-class community shaped by education, politics, and church life. At St. James Presbyterian Church, her pastor, William Lloyd Imes, nurtured her gifts and encouraged her calling. By age sixteen, Emily was already teaching Sunday school and serving as a camp counselor with the New York Missions Society. Emily studied biology at Hunter College, initially planning to become a teacher. After graduating in 1936 amid limited job opportunities, she shifted paths, completing secretarial training at Gibbs Business School. She soon became the private secretary to Genevieve Earle, the first woman elected to the New York City Council, while simultaneously earning a master's degree in religious education from New York University.

In 1947, Emily joined the Board of Christian Education, rising quickly to Director of Religious Education and later Regional Secretary for Women's Work in the PCUSA. She traveled widely, developing leadership programs for women and youth across the United States and abroad. Her work expanded internationally through the Women's International Fellowship, with visits to South and East Asia. In 1966, Emily became a missionary, serving in Cameroon and Kenya, where she built leadership schools and strengthened local church communities. Returning to the United States, she worked with the National Council of Churches on the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, advocating for more inclusive language. She later served on the board of New York Theological Seminary and taught there for five years.

After a remarkable career of faith and leadership, Dr. Gibbs retired in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. She died on March 22, 2004, leaving a legacy of courage, scholarship, and commitment to empowering women in the church and beyond.

Presbyterian Women's Winter Retreat – March 6 to 7

All women are invited to an overnight *Late Winter Retreat* at Crestfield Camp by Presbyterian Women from Friday evening to Saturday afternoon, March 6–7, for community, learning, led by Pastor Sarah Robbins. **Register today in the Overlook Room after worship, download the form at <https://cathedralofhope.org/event/pw-winter-retreat/>, or email PW.ELPC@gmail.com for more info.**

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES	February 8
– Adults –	
<i>Adult classes are held from 9:45-10:45 am in the rooms indicated:</i>	
Journey with Scripture – Highland Room + Zoom Practice Visio and Lectio Divina with Pastor BJ and Rev. Bossers. Facilitated by Rev. Henk Bossers	
Seekers – Garth Overlook Room + Zoom African Spirituality led by Dalian Adofo. Facilitated by Gwen Puza	
Soul Food – Good Samaritan Room + Zoom We will continue our discussion of <i>So You Want to Talk About Race</i> by Ijeoma Oluo. Facilitated by Rev. Joe Hajdu and other class members	