



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)

3RD SUNDAY IN LENT

MARCH 8, 2026 • 11 AM SANCTUARY WORSHIP

PRELUDE “Little Prelude and Fugue in F Major, BWV 556” attr. Johann Sebastian Bach
Dr. Edward Alan Moore, *organ*

WELCOME VIDEO

CALL TO WORSHIP Michael Schenz, Beverly Harris-Schenz

Leader: People of God, now is the time for worship.

People: We have good news to share.

Leader: If you need a word of hope, then trust us when we say,

People: There is hope enough to go around.

Leader: If you need a glimmer of joy, then behold,

People: We have resilient joy abounding.

Leader: If you need to feel God’s presence in your midst,

People: Then know that this is God’s house.

Leader: This is the good news of the gospel.

People: God is here. Love is real. Joy is on the move.

* **PROCESSIONAL HYMN** (*see insert*) “Human Minds Just Can’t Imagine” AUSTRIAN HYMN

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.*

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Presentation of Caroline Patricia Bancroft-Paternoster (granddaughter of Bruce and Patricia Bancroft)

Leader: By word, deed, love, and prayer, do you as members of the church of Jesus Christ promise to guide and nurture Caroline, encouraging her to know and follow Christ and to be a faithful member of the church?

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.

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

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* **HYMN #301** (*verse 3*)

“Let Us Build a House”

TWO OAKS

FIRST READING

Michael Schenz, Beverly Harris-Schenz

from *Feeding the Five Thousand* by Gary Hamblin

Sitting in the crowd, waiting for God to act, we can hang on to our own little loaves of bread. They are not much; they would not go far. Besides, if Jesus is in charge of the bread, doesn't that excuse us from sharing our own? God will provide; let God provide. Let them feed themselves, say the disciples. “You give them something to eat,” says Jesus. Not me but you; not my bread but yours; not sometime or somewhere else but right here and now. Stop looking for someone else to solve the problem and solve it yourselves. Stop waiting for food to fall from the sky and share what you have. Stop waiting for a miracle and participate in one instead.

Leader: May God bless the truth in these words.

People: **Amen.**

LITANY FOR LENT

Rev. BJ Woodworth

Leader: God, you make a way where we perceive none. You feed the hungry and restore the weary.

People: **You bring hope where we least expect it.**

Leader: Yet we confess that we often think too small.

People: **We encounter great needs and assume nothing can be done.**

Leader: Forgive us when we forget your power among us. Forgive us when we turn away from offering what we have.

People: **God of compassion, have mercy on us.**

Leader: We pray for all who hunger this day and for those needing food, shelter, and hope. Strengthen communities longing for justice and peace.

People: **Show us the abundance of your grace when we believe there is not enough.**

Leader: Today is a new day, and once again, we belong to God.

People: **We are forgiven. We are called. We are not alone. What good, good news. Amen.**

* **HYMN #312**

“Take Us As We Are, O God”

ENDLESS FEAST

SCRIPTURE READING

Mark 6:32-44

Rev. Sarah Robbins

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

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

“The Good News is ... Together, the impossible is possible”

Rev. Robbins

MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Rev. Woodworth

Leader: I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.

People: **It sounds like welcome and feels like home. It sounds like laughter and feels like mercy.**

Leader: It sounds like love and feels like a seat at the table, so I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.

People: **I have seen it alive in the world.**

Leader: And even when my heart aches, even when wars rage, even when mercy feels out of reach,

People: **I remember the one who welcomed the children and led with nonviolence.**

Leader: I remember the one who cared for the vulnerable and inspired those around him.

People: **I remember that the good news really is good news, for I have seen it alive in the world. Thanks be to God! Amen.**

*Indicates where you may rise in body or spirit.

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

Rev. Woodworth

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

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.

CHURCH NEWS & OFFERING INVITATION

Rev. Robbins, 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

“Many Gifts, One Spirit”

Allen Pote

Many gifts, one spirit. Many songs, one voice. Many reasons, one promises. Many questions, one choice. O God, we pray for unity, give guidance from above. In our differences unite us in the circle of your love. O, God, remind us we are not alone. Though we move on different pathways, we are walking to your throne.

Help us learn to love each other, show us ways to understand. We are members of one family, growing strong by joining hands. Take our many ways of working, blend the colors of each soul into the beauty of a rainbow. Give us life, Lord, make us whole.

* **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 DEDICATION** *(in unison)*

Rev. Woodworth

Compassionate God, you see the hunger of the world and call us to respond with open hearts and open hands. Bless these gifts and use them so that all may find care and belonging. Through Christ we pray. Amen.

* **RECESSIONAL HYMN #320**

“The Church of Christ in Every Age”

WAREHAM

* **RESPONSIVE CHARGE**

Rev. Robbins

Leader: As we leave this place, may we hold on to this good news:

People: **love and justice for all, joy that surprises, nonviolence that transforms.**

Leader: The gospel is alive in the world, so go and speak it. Live it.

People: **May we hold on to this good news.**

* **SUNG BENEDICTION** *(see music insert)*

“Hold On”

The worship service concludes after singing. There is no Postlude during Lent.



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. Sarah Robbins (she/they)
Liturgists: Rev. BJ Woodworth (he/him)
Sara Hackett
Beverly Harris-Schenz
Michael Schenz
Musicians: Dr. Edward Alan Moore (he/him)
Director of Music and Arts
ELPC Chancel Choir
Beadle: Liz Hopkins
Crucifer: Jason Van Ness
Sound: Tim Benedict and Wayne Gaines

◆ WORSHIP FLOWERS

The flowers today are sponsored by the Hoehn family in honor of **Carol Hoehn** who is retiring after 45 years of service in nursing and patient health services. A graduate of Clarion University, she began her career in 1981 as a resident nurse at West Penn Hospital, where she served for more than 25 years. She later continued her work at Forbes Regional Hospital in Monroeville, concluding her career as a Patient Care Coordinator. We wish Carol all the best in her retirement!



Please see today's bulletin insert to sponsor an Easter plant, or to make a donation to the EECM food pantry.

◆ 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

◆ 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.

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* on **Sunday, April 12 after the 11 am worship service** to learn more about ELPC, Presbyterian theology, and to explore membership. Lunch will be provided. Please register at elpc.church/visit-us/becoming-a-member, or contact Jen King (JenK@coh.net).

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



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.

LGBTQIA+ Ministry Spiritual Gathering

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

Social Hour and Tree Equity Presentation

Today's program after the 11 am worship service from the Environmental Team of the Justice Committee will focus on the issue of Tree Equity, and will include an expert from Tree Pittsburgh and a speaker from the National Religious Partnership for the Environment, who will provide a faith and justice perspective. Light refreshments will be provided in the Fellowship Room.

Tree Pittsburgh and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy will offer advice on tree maintenance, volunteer opportunities, how to get a tree for your yard, and more. See them and our Landscape Subcommittee in the Garth Overlook Room. The program will also be available online. Contact Nancy Heastings (n.heastings@comcast.net) for the zoom link.

Cafe Justo is Back!

Due to coffee bean shortage last year for a variety of reasons, ELPC had not received a shipment of coffee from our mission partners in over 6 months. Giving them some time to normalize their operational procedures, they now feel confident that they will be able to fulfill orders in 2026 in a timely manner. This will also be the first time selling that will reflect the new price change of \$15/pound that we voted on last October. This will be our first price increase in 14 years and help them offset the 150% increase in the Mexican minimum wage over the last 6 years. As a reminder, this is not a fund raiser for ELPC. We sell coffee as a mission opportunity to create relationships across borders in which many ELPC members have attended over the years while also addressing the root causes of migration by buying directly from the Cafe Justo grower owned cooperative. Please see Ryan Booher in the Highland Ave corridor following the 11 am service.

Step Into the Story of Nell and Poll Exhibit

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. The storywalk includes images paired with prayers, guided meditations, poetry, and reflections. This is an opportunity to pause, pray, and engage with narratives that challenge and inspire.

The storywalk is available through Easter Sunday on:

Tuesdays through Fridays from 9 am-8 pm

Saturdays and Sundays from 9 am-3 pm

NOTE: This exhibit is appropriate for older children,

but please use your discretion for younger children.

ELPC Communications Survey

ELPC's new Communications Team is asking for your feedback as we assess our current ELPC communication tools, identify any gaps, and make recommendations about how best to connect with people in the life of the church. Please complete a brief survey online by scanning this QR code, or by visiting: tiny.cc/elpc-communications.



Praying with Art for Families & Tweens – Wednesdays

On Wednesday evenings in Lent from 5-7 pm, families and tweens are invited to share dinner, make art, and explore different ways of praying this Lent. Activities will follow the themes in our Lenten worship and devotional series *Tell Me Something Good*. Families of any age are welcome to come and tweens in 3rd-6th grade can join with or without a parent. RSVP to Sara (SaraH@coh.net).

Lenten Conversations:

Tell Me Something Good – Wednesdays through April 1

Feeling overwhelmed in life? Join Pastor Michael on Wednesday evenings through April 1 in the Good Samaritan Room as we slow down and listen for a different kind of news. Each week from 5:30-7 pm, we'll gather for honest, hope-filled conversations rooted in Sunday's sermon and our series *Tell Me Something Good: Grounding Ourselves in the Good News This Lent*. Together we'll explore Jesus' life through the scriptures and ask deeper questions about the text, the sermon, and what it means for us today.

Whether you're curious, weary, skeptical, or hopeful, there's room for you. Our goal is not to give each other easy answers but to speak from our own perspective and experiences. A light dinner will be served at 6:30 pm. Please register online at:

tiny.cc/tell-me-something-good



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

Ali, Carlos, Nancy, Nicole and family,
Theresa, Rebecca A, Diane M, Wayne Y,
Linda Benedict, Pierena Morelli,
Jan Pressman’s grandson, and Liz Tafel.

*Condolences to **Rachelle Calfee**
on the passing of her brother, Arnold.*

*Condolences to **Carol Chontos** on the passing of her friend.*

*Condolences to **Laneka** on the passing of her cousin.*

Committee Meetings This Week

Deacons Tuesday, March 10 @ 7:00 pm
Worship, Music, Arts Tuesday, March 10 @ 7:30 pm

For info to join a meeting, contact Jen King (JenK@coh.net).

Family Game Day with Happy Wanderers – March 15

After the 11 am service on Sunday, March 15, children and their families are meeting with ELPC’s seniors community group *The Happy Wanderers* for a special joint event for an afternoon of games. ELPC’s Children & Youth will teach games from their youth to our seniors, and ELPC seniors will teach games from their youth to our communities’ children. An allergy friendly lunch will be provided. All ages welcome. No experience required. RSVP to Sara Hackett (SaraH@coh.net).

Young Adult Happy Hour – March 16

On Monday, March 16, the Young Adult Happy Hour continues at Rev. Michael Diaz and Nino Testo’s home. Happening on the 3rd Monday of every month from 6-7:30 pm, join us for appetizers and drinks (both alcoholic and non-alcoholic). RSVP online for location details. Our Young Adult Ministry welcomes all adults post-high school through their 20s and 30s. ALL people and questions are welcome! RSVP at <https://invite.social/ipuhrmbkfgbrsrpg>

SSA Training Rescheduled – March 21

All are invited to attend the RESCHEDULED training session on Saturday, March 21 from 1-4 pm in the McKelvy Room on how to remain safe if an intruder enters the church building, hosted by ELPC’s Safety and Security Advisory Committee. Pre-register by March 15 at tiny.cc/safety-training, or call Jen King (412.441.3800 x222).

Upcoming Church Tours – March 22 and April 19

Tom Morton will lead a tour of the Sanctuary and Chapel on March 22. On Sunday, April 19, join our guides for a tour of the Tower. (*Pre-register at tiny.cc/towertour as this tour is limited to 20 participants.*) Please gather in the Highland Lobby after the 11 am Sanctuary worship service to join any of our tours.

In our

COMMUNITY



2026 Hunger Advocacy Workshop – March 14

Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania and SWPA Bread for the World are sponsoring the 2026 Hunger Advocacy Workshop *Rising to the Challenge* on Saturday, March 14 from 9 am—1 pm at the Kearns Spirituality Center (Allison Park). This workshop will feature a lineup of speakers to help us understand the complexities and possibilities of our current environment, including Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture Russell Redding, Rev. Heather Taylor, Managing Director of Bread for the World, as well as a panel of local experts who will explore the shape of hunger in our own neighborhoods. Admission is free. Sign up at: bit.ly/bread2026.

Help Your Neighbors During Tax Season!

Low/moderate income taxpayers can receive free tax preparation at Free Tax Prep sites throughout the Pittsburgh area. You can help our neighbors receive vital refund money by becoming a free tax prep volunteer (training and tax preparation software provided). Join ELPC member Lynne Chadwick at the Homewood YMCA or volunteer at one of the other 20+ sites in the area. To sign up for shifts and training, go to <https://tinyurl.com/FreeTaxPrep-JustHarvest>. Contact Lynne with questions (LynneNChadwick@gmail.com). If you make less than \$50,000 per year (individual) or \$70,000 (family), you are eligible to have your taxes prepared for free.

Sewing Donations for Casa San Jose

The Casa San Jose Sewing Circle plans to start up again after Christmas. They are seeking donations of fabric of all kinds, sewing supplies, portable sewing machines and especially a cutting board. Please contact Paris Samboy (paris@casasanjose.org; 412.287.7817).

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES March 15

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

Journey with Scripture – Highland Room + Zoom

A Lenten practice *Visio and Lectio Divina* with Pastor BJ and Rev. Bossers. Facilitated by Rev. Henk Bossers

Seekers – Garth Overlook Room + Zoom

Faces Around the Cross: Judas—The Man Who Loved to Steal, led by Rev. Dr. Darrell Knopp. Facilitated by Gwen Puza

Soul Food – Good Samaritan Room + Zoom

Continuing discussion of *How We Learn to Be Brave* by Bishop Mariann Budde. Facilitated by Rev. Joe Hajdu and other class members