

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)

5TH SUNDAY IN LENT

MARCH 22, 2026 • 11 AM SANCTUARY WORSHIP

PRELUDE

“Prelude and Fugue in C Minor, BWV 546”

Johann Sebastian Bach
Dr. Edward Alan Moore, *organ*
Amy Cheney Beach
Brady Conley, *viola*

“Berceuse, Op. 40, No. 2”

WELCOME VIDEO

CALL TO WORSHIP

Sam Arnold, August Yoest

Leader: Welcome to the weary and the worn.

People: Welcome to the wiggly and the eager.

Leader: Welcome to the skeptical and the seeking.

People: Welcome to the early risers and those still trying to wake up.

Leader: Welcome to the rule followers and the rule breakers.

People: Welcome to those hungry for justice and those desperate for mercy.

Leader: Welcome to the sinners and the saints.

People: This is God’s house.

Leader: You can make yourself at home here.

People: Let us worship our just, merciful, and faithful God!

* PROCESSIONAL HYMN #445

“God, How Can We Forgive”

LEONI

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.*

* HYMN OF RESPONSE #301 (verse 5)

“Let Us Build a House”

TWO OAKS



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

* Indicates where you may rise in body or spirit.

FIRST READING

by Rev. Lizzie McManus-Dail

Sam Arnold, August Yoest

The inconvenience of receiving and extending of mercy is that it's hardly ever merited. Mercy - unmerited, inadvisably offered, and brimming with foolish hope - is the making of a Christ follower. It's not that practicing mercy is particularly easy. I doubt Jesus would talk so much about forgiveness and mercy if it were easy - God tends to repeat what we struggle to listen to. No, mercy is brutal... Mercy makes no sense. It is not logical, or equally beneficial. Mercy does not make us money or make us look good. But mercy is what makes us God's own. The receiving and extending of mercy in the most awful and improbable of places is what makes me know that God is still at work in this world. Mercy is a practice of hoping and knowing that there is more than the thing that hurts us - more than the thing that haunts us.

Leader: May God bless the truth in these words.

People: Amen.

LITANY FOR LENT

Sam Arnold, August Yoest

Leader: Jesus once said to a crowd, "Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone."

People: Yet we often pick up stones... love to live our lives by the rules, right and wrong, and swift justice.

Leader: But you show us another way: mercy, compassion and grace.

People: You welcome shades of gray and nuanced conversation; mercy over legality; people over tradition and love over everything.

Leader: Remind us that none of us are without sin. None of us get it right all the time. None of us can get by without God's grace.

People: Forgive us for losing sight of what truly matters, for clinging tighter to laws than to each other or to you.

Leader: Soften our hearts. Root us in mercy, justice, and love and help us embrace the Good News.

People: May we all know that we are forgiven, loved, and invited to choose another way. Thanks be to God for yet another second chance.

HYMN (*see insert*)

"Let Us Remember"

ADELAIDE

SCRIPTURE READING

John 8:2-11 (*Inclusive translation*)

Rev. BJ Woodworth

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

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

"The good news is...MERCY"

Rev. Woodworth

TIME OF SILENT REFLECTION

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rev. Dr. Michael Diaz

THE LORD'S PRAYER (*in language/ 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 (Ἑβραῖο) in the 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.

CHURCH NEWS & OFFERING INVITATION

Rev. Dr. Diaz, 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.



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

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

“There’s a Wideness in God’s Mercy”

Calvin Hampton
Text: Frederick William Faber

There’s a wideness in God’s mercy like the wideness of the sea;
there’s a kindness in God’s justice, which is more than liberty.
There is welcome for the sinner, and more graces for the good;
there is mercy with the Savior; there is healing in the blood.
There is no place where earth’s sorrows are more felt than up in heaven;
there is no place where earth’s failings have such kindly judgment given.
There is plentiful redemption in the blood that has been shed;
there is joy for all the members in the sorrows of the Head.
For the love of God is broader than the measure of the mind;
and the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind.
If our love were but more faithful, we would gladly trust God’s word;
and our life would be thanksgiving for the goodness of the Lord.

* **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

Merciful God, thank you for your abundant gifts of kindness and generously lavishing your love upon us. Receive these gifts as a symbol of our gratitude and use them to further the flourishing of your beloved community in us and in the world. Amen.

* **RECESSIONAL HYMN #649**

“Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound”

AMAZING GRACE

* **RESPONSIVE CHARGE**

Rev. Woodworth

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. BJ Woodworth (he/him)
Liturgists: Rev. Dr. Michael Diaz (he/him/él)
Sara Hackett
Sam Arnold
August Yoest
Musicians: Dr. Edward Alan Moore (he/him)
Director of Music and Arts
ELPC Chancel Choir
Brady Conley, *viola*
Beadle: Laura Ristau
Crucifer: Linda Davis
Sound: Tim Benedict and Wayne Gaines

◆ WORSHIP FLOWERS

The flowers today are given by Dr. Edward Alan Moore in loving memory of William Harry Moore.

Please see today's bulletin insert to sponsor an Easter plant, or to make a donation to the EECM food pantry. Today is the last day to place an order.

◆ 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

◆ 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.

Sunday, 22 March 2026 – Fifth Sunday in Lent

This morning is the fifth Sunday in the season of Lent, a period of 40 days between Ash Wednesday and Easter. The six Sundays in Lent are not counted in the 40 days. To read more about the season of Lent:

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

Prelude

The *Prelude and Fugue in C Minor* is believed to have been composed at two separate times in Bach's life. The fugue was probably composed during Bach's years in Weimar (1708-1717) and later paired with the prelude, written in Leipzig around 1730. Together they create a powerful pair.

Amy Cheney Beach's (1867-1944) *Gaelic* Symphony was premiered by the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1896. It was the first symphony composed and published by an American woman. During her life and for many years after her death she was known as Mrs. H.H.A. Beach, a stipulation of her marriage to Dr. Henry Harris Aubrey Beach, who was twenty-four years her senior. A revival of her music in the late 20th Century was accompanied by an acknowledgement of her own given name and not that of her husband.

Sermon Hymn (after litany)

Let Us Remember is from our Lenten devotional materials, *Tell Me Something Good*. It is set to the familiar tune ADELAIDE by George E. Stebbins (1846-1945), which is best known accompanying the hymn text *Have Thine Own Way, Lord* by Adelaide A. Pollard (1862-1934).

Offertory Anthem

Calvin Hampton (1938-1984) wrote the tune St. Helena to accompany Frederick William Faber's (1814-1863) text *There's a Wideness in God's Glory*. Hampton was organist and choirmaster of Calvary Episcopal Church, Gramercy Park, New York City and an active composer, having been dubbed by Eric Routley as "the greatest living composer of hymn tunes."

Benediction Response

Hold On has been sung at many of the demonstrations in Minneapolis recently and the song has spread across the country. Songwriter Heidi Wilson says:

"It is January 2026, and the people of Minneapolis are inspiring us with what it looks like to really take care of one another in the face of escalating ICE raids and authoritarian violence. They are walking kids to school, delivering food to neighbors, standing on street corners in rapid response. And they are singing. I am humbled and moved that this song is useful to folks right now."

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.

Lenten Devotional Materials Available

Pick up your Lenten devotionals, *Tell Me Something Good: Grounding Ourselves in the Good News this Lent*, at ELPC. You can request an e-reader version online at:

<https://cathedralofhope.org/news/tell-me-something-good-lenten-devotionals-now-available/>

Social Hour

The Hope Academy staff and the Membership and Outreach Committee are hosting our social hour after today's 11 am worship service in the Fellowship Room. Please join us for light snacks, a time to meet someone new, and hear more about the amazing work that Hope Academy offers this community each week!

Sanctuary & Chapel Tour

Tom Morton will lead a tour of the Sanctuary and Chapel today. Please gather in the Highland Lobby after the 11 am Sanctuary worship service to attend.

Step Into the Story of Nell and Poll Exhibit

Please take some time to visit a unique, self-guided experience in the Trustees Room — a storywalk on the lives of Nell and Poll, members of a family enslaved and sold by two of our early founders. It has stations paired with prayers, guided meditations, poetry, and reflections.

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.



Sunday March 29– PALM SUNDAY

8:45 am in the chapel

11 am in the sanctuary

**** NO TAIZE SERVICE ON WED, APRIL 1 ****

Thursday, April 2– MAUNDY THURSDAY

7pm in the sanctuary with Communion

Friday, April 3– GOOD FRIDAY

Noon in the chapel

7 pm in the sanctuary

Saturday, April 4– EASTER VIGIL

7pm begins in narthex, moves in Chapel and sanctuary

Sunday, April 5– EASTER SUNDAY

8:45am in the chapel with Communion

11am in the sanctuary with Communion

Please note no lilies will be in our worship spaces due to allergies.

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. A light dinner will be served at 6:30 pm. Register online at: tiny.cc/tell-me-something-good

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).

Sponsor an Easter Plant

Order forms are available in the bulletin.
TODAY is the deadline to order.





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

Ali, Carlos, Fran, Jeff, Kim, Mark, Patti, Mike H, Nicole and family, Theresa, Rebecca A, Diane M, Linda Benedict, Jan Herzer's friend Kim and friend Jeff, Paige McKenzi, Pierena Morelli, Jan Pressman's grandson, Liz Tafel, Robert, Raesean, Sara, Sarah, Herma and family.

Condolences to the family of **Barbara Davis** on her passing. She was ELPC's former bookkeeper.

Condolences to **Jason Van Ness** on the passing of his mother-in-law.

Condolences to the family of **Wayne Younger** on his passing.

Committee Meeting This Week

Peace.....Thursday, March 26 @ 5:30 pm

Palm Sunday Processional – March 29

Kids (and parents too!) are invited to join our processional at the beginning of our 11 am service on Palm Sunday, March 29. Please meet in the Narthex around 10:50 am to get palm branches and instructions.

Wills & Healthcare Decisions Clinic – April 12

The ELPC Board of Deacons Health Ministry will sponsor a *Wills & Healthcare Decisions Clinic* presented by students from the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University to be held on Sunday, April 12 at 12:30 pm in the Good Samaritan Room (ground floor). To RSVP or with any questions, please contact Tom Sturgill (sturgillpgh@yahoo.com).

Tower Tour – April 19

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.

Listening for Gods Heartbeat Retreat – April 24 to 26

Join us for a retreat at Villa Maria Retreat Center from April 24-26 with Rev. Jeff Eddings. Our gatherings will be based on Phillip Newell's *Listening for the Heartbeat of God: Celtic Daily Prayer*, which invites participants into the rich stream of Celtic spirituality through ways of listening for God. We will explore different movements of listening—for goodness, within creation, for God in all things, with imagination, and in action.

Jeff will pair a reflection on a chapter with a contemplative practice such as reimagining the Jesus Prayer, walking attentively in creation, gathering the graces, engaging the imagination, and embracing a “chaos of uncalculating love.”

Please register by scanning this QR code.



In our

COMMUNITY



Hosanna! A Palm Sunday Procession – March 29

We are called to Christian witness as our immigrant neighbors are hunted and our trans neighbors demonized. We will meet at Community of Reconciliation Church (100 N Bellefield, Oakland), then process around the Cathedral of Learning quadrangle with palms, prayers and song beginning at 3 pm on Sunday, March 29.

Contact Michele Bossers if you would like to ride in the church van (412.303.9243). Scan QR code for more info.



Garfield Community Farm Native Plant Sale

Our mission partner, GCF, is offering a variety of native plants for sale this spring. Included are wild indigo shrub, purple hyssop plant, wild bergamot, and pawpaw trees! Order online at www.garfieldfarm.com/nativeplants.

Free Tax Preparation

Low/moderate income taxpayers can receive free tax preparation. For more info, please visit: www.justharvest.org/freetaxprep

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES March 29

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. Henk Bossers.

Seekers – Garth Overlook Room + Zoom
From Sadness to Solidarity led by Rev. Sarah Robbins
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



INQUIRERS' CLASS
Sunday, April 12
after 11 am worship service

Attend the next *Inquirers' Class* on Sunday, April 12 after the 11am Sanctuary worship service in the McKelvy room.

Learn more about ELPC, Presbyterian theology, and to explore membership. Lunch will be provided.

Register online at: visit elpc.church/visit-us/becoming-a-member, or contact Jen King (JenK@coh.net).