

Newsletter

A NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF ELMHURST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

PASTOR'S + CORNER

REV. TRACI SMITH



Five Things I'm Grateful For and Excited About

These past few years have been hard (Can I get an amen?).

The pandemic threw us all into a tailspin, professionally, personally and, yes, even as a church. We had to make a lot of changes very quickly and they weren't all easy. As I sit here in late July, 2022, the pandemic is not over. It's merely shifted. I've just recovered from my own COVID19 infection. And yet, I'm grateful. There are a lot of reasons to be thankful at EPC right now, and I thought I'd share some of them with you in my *Pastor's Corner* this month. Enjoy!

New Visitors Online and In Person — We hear a lot of stories about the decline of the church. What about it's growth? EPC is blessed with new visitors, almost every week recently, both online and in person. This is a gift from God! Though we continue to work out some of the challenges, our live-stream allows people to visit us virtually and for people to remain connected even if they don't attend church in person.

New Furniture in the Nelson-White Room — The next time you stop by the Nelson White room, I hope you check out a couple of new features. First, there is a lovely new piece of furniture, donated by Steve and Amy Mortenson. This furniture is a new collection spot for food items to be given to our partner ministries. It looks great and is a classy upgrade to the older shopping carts we used to have in the space. Thank you, Mortensens! Second, there is a new prayer shawl ladder in the Nelson White Room where we can display the beautiful work of our Prayer Shawl ministry. This ladder will allow us to keep the work of the prayer shawl ministry visible and on display and remind people of the incredible gift this ministry has become.

New First Floor Conference Space — As Buttons and Bows transitions out of the first floor space of our building, we've started to reclaim the space. The room that Buttons and Bows had been using for storage is now a conference room where Session or other groups can meet. The meeting space is available in the evenings and on weekends, for now, because Buttons and Bows is still in session during the week. If you'd like to reserve the space for your meeting or group, please sign up with Christi in the main office by emailing epc@elmhurstchurch.org.

Exciting Worship Series in August and September — We'll be kicking off the month of August with a name blessing ceremony for those who are living into a new name and gender (please see page X for more details on this). On August 14 we'll bless students for a new year by blessing their backpacks and sending them in to a new school year. August 21 is Leadership Sunday! In September, we'll be doing a series on Faith Stories where we'll have the opportunity to hear faith stories from some of our members. Members will interview each other and we'll have a chance to be inspired by the faith of our community.

What are you excited about these days?

With grace and peace,
Pastor Traci

INSIDE

PAGE 2
Upcoming Events

PAGE 3
Upcoming Events
cont.

PAGE 4
Inclusion & Awareness
Article

PAGE 5
Volunteer
Opportunities

PAGE 6
Worship Livestream
Information

Elmhurst Presbyterian Church
Sundays @ 10:30 am

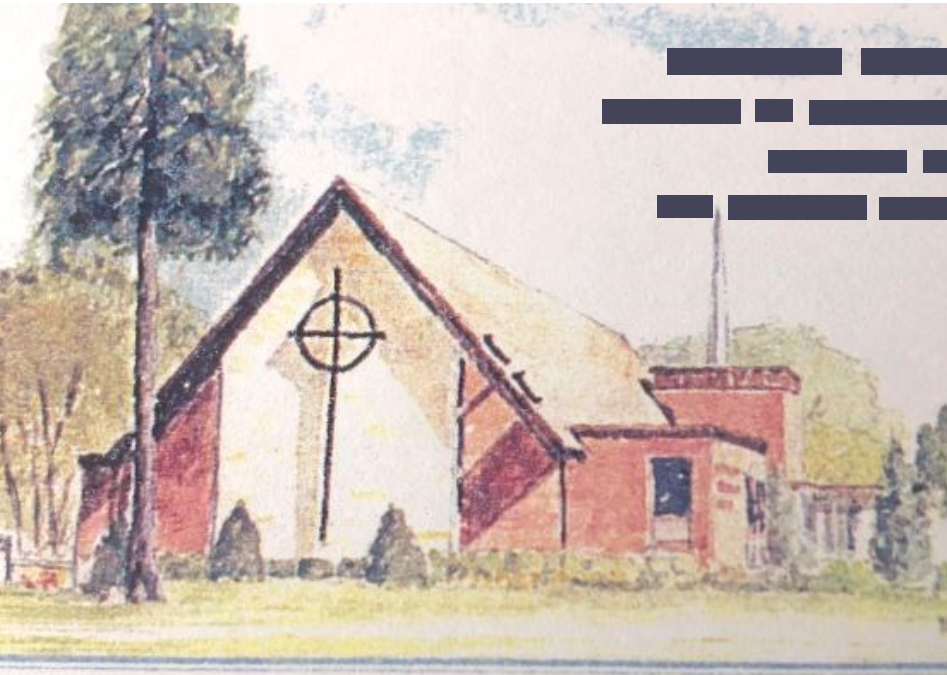
Live
Stream



youtube.com/elmhurstpresbyterianchurch

UPCOMING» EVENTS

HAPPENING IN AUGUST »»»



Back to School Fair

Saturday, August 6th
10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

*Volunteer Opportunity
See Pg. 5

Name Blessing Ceremony

Sunday, August 7th
10:30 AM (During Worship)

EPC Summer Wednesdays



Wednesday, August 10th
5:30 - 7:30 PM

*Volunteer Opportunity
See Pg. 5

Blessing of the Backpacks & Tori the Therapy Dog

Sunday August 14th
10:30 AM (During Worship)

EPC HAPPENINGS

We will be celebrating the Lord's Supper and also a Name Blessing Ceremony for the transgender community on August 7th. This ceremony will be a celebration of who and whose you are and all are welcome!

Our last EPC Summer Wednesday will be taking place on August 10th. Stop by for a campfire evening with s'mores and games!

Can you believe it's almost time for back to school? Bring your backpack to worship on August 14th to get a special blessing before the start of school and see Tori the Therapy Dog.

Starting this September, we will be beginning a new sermon series called *Faith Stories* about faith and life featuring YOU, the members of EPC! ***If you would like to participate, please contact Pastor Traci.***

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

EPC Garden Team

Vegetable harvesting has begun!

Please bring in your plastic fruit and tomato containers to use for packaging and delivery to the food pantry. We'll collect them in a box in the **Nelson-White room.**

Thank you from the garden team!



EPC Music Team

Calling all musicians! Did you play an instrument in school? Brush up your skills and make a joyful noise to the Lord!

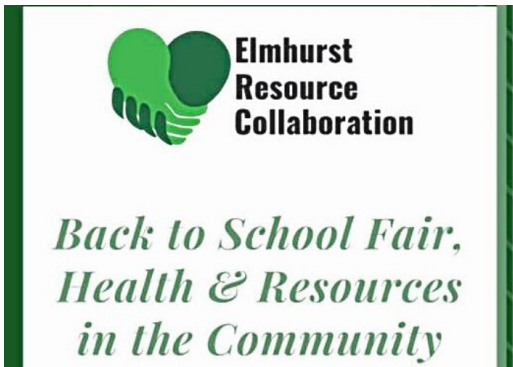
Contact **Susan Smentek, Director of Music**
630-202-2336
She'd love to hear from you!



The Elmhurst Resource Collaboration Back to School Fair

This event at York High School helps share back to school resources. We need 1-2 volunteers from 10 AM till noon or noon till 2 PM on **Saturday, August 6.**

If interested, please contact **Pastor Traci.**



EPC Summer Wednesdays

Volunteers need for **Wednesday, August 10** from 5:30-7:30 PM to help provide a gathering of faith, food, and fellowship.

If interested, contact our church office or check out the sign-up sheet in the church lobby.

Liturgists and Ushers Needed!

The Worship Team is looking for folks to serve as Liturgists or Ushers on Sunday mornings. Scan the QR code to sign up!



INCLUSION & AWARENESS

BY PASTOR TRACI

On Sunday, August 7th, we'll be celebrating in a gender renaming service. This service is an opportunity for transgender people to live into the fullness of their identity by having their name validated, blessed and recognized in a house of worship.

If you are interested in learning more about transgender people, please visit:

<https://www.glaad.org/reference/transgender>.

The words we will use in the ceremony are these, and they come to us via the Rev. Dr. Cameron Partridge:

Transgender Renaming Service

Ceremony to honor and commemorate persons coming into the fullness of their identity with the support of their worshipping community.

Minister: We are here to affirm the name of _____, _____, and _____. Each name symbolizes all that you are becoming through the grace of God. We honor the names given you by your parents. We release them into your history and acknowledge that the time has come to declare a new name. This name is the culmination of a journey of discovery and, at the same time, its beginning.

(Spoken to the congregation)

Will you do all in your power to assist _____, _____, and _____ to maintain justice, to do what is right, and to live fully into the person that God has created them to be?

Congregation: We will.

Prayer of Blessing:

Dynamic and holy God, we remember how you changed the names of Abraham and Sarah, as they set out to follow you. We know that you changed the name of Jacob, after a long night of wrestling with you. We now declare publicly and affirm the name you have bestowed upon _____, _____, and _____ *(laying hands upon each head)*

_____ receive the blessings of God. Walk in the spirit this day and always, knowing that God has made an everlasting covenant with you, that shall never be cut off.

In the name of the Creator, Christ and Holy Spirit, Amen.

Minister: Jesus said, "Rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

Congregation: Alleluia! Amen.

(c) 2022 Many Voices (www.manyvoices.org) Used by permission
Contributed by Reverend Dr. Cameron Partridge



«UPCOMING EVENTS

« « « COMING THIS FALL

'Cue for a Cause EWAN Fundraiser

Sunday, September 4th
12:00- 7:00 PM
(After Worship)

All Church Picnic

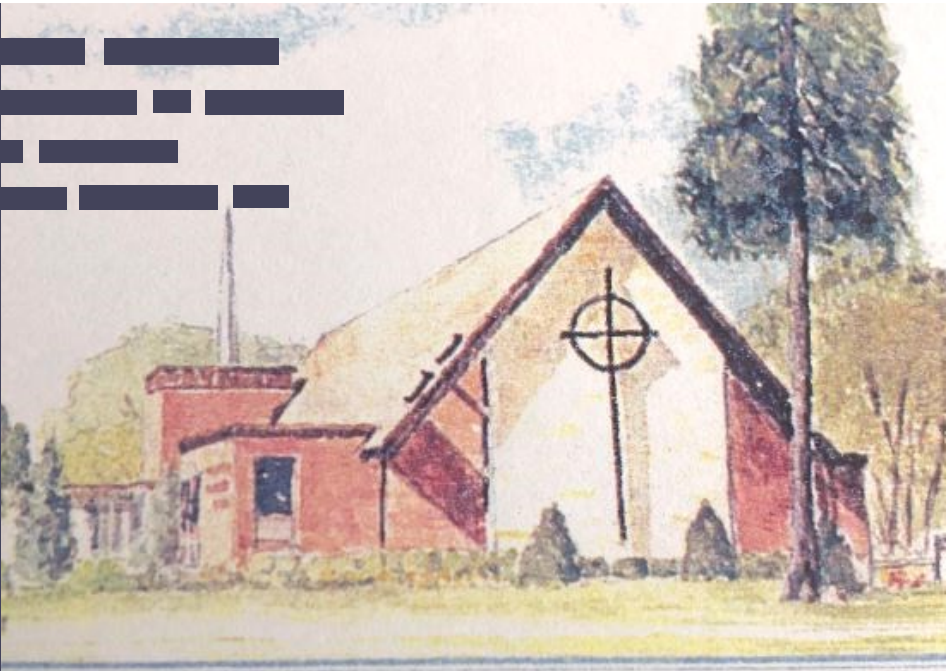
Sunday, September
11th
(After Worship)

Blessing of the Animals

Saturday, October 8th
4:00 PM

EPC's Trunk or Treat

Sunday, October
30th
12:00 -1:30 PM
(After Worship)



EPC HAPPENINGS

'Cue for a Cause is the most delicious fundraiser in town! Feel free to visit on your own or with our EPC group to eat barbecue, listen to music, and support the work of the walk-in ministry.

Visit www.elmhurstwalkin.org/2022-cue to learn more about the event or sign-up for the baking competition!

Our All Church Picnic is coming up this September! All are welcome to drop by after worship for good food and good times!

Our pets are like family. Bring your pet or their picture so they can receive a special blessing during this Blessing of the Animals service.

Now that Summer will be coming to a close, get excited for this Fall's Trunk or Treat. Prepare your Halloween costumes and get ready for an evening of candy, games, and fun spooks!