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The Episcopal School of Pittsburgh Names the Rev. Charles L. Fischer III Founding Head of School

*Experienced Episcopal priest and advancement leader
will guide the tuition-free school toward its fall 2027 opening*

PITTSBURGH, Pa. — September 16, 2026 — The Episcopal School of Pittsburgh has named the Rev. Charles L. Fischer III its founding head of school. Fischer will lead the development of Pittsburgh's newest tuition-free Episcopal elementary school as it prepares to welcome its first students in fall 2027.

The school will open with an inaugural kindergarten class at the Church of the Holy Cross in Pittsburgh's Homewood community and add one grade each year. It is being established to provide children with a high-quality, holistic education while partnering closely with families to help every student flourish academically, socially, emotionally, and spiritually.

Fischer has played a central role in the school's development from its earliest planning stages. He has helped shape its mission, listen to families, build relationships with community partners, and lay the foundation for a school rooted in dignity, belonging, joyful learning, and enduring support for children and their families.

"Charles has been a driving force in bringing this vision into its next phase," said Eileen Sharbaugh, chair of the Episcopal Education Exploratory Committee, which led the early planning that resulted in the creation of The Episcopal School of Pittsburgh. "His combination of pastoral leadership, community engagement, advancement experience, and commitment to children and families makes him the right person to guide the school through its formative years. He understands that a great school is built on relationships, and he has already earned the trust of families, community partners, and supporters throughout Pittsburgh. We are excited to have him lead us as we turn a shared vision into a school community where every child is known, valued, and given the opportunity to flourish."



Fischer comes to the role following nearly seven years at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. He joined the Seminary in November 2019 as vice president for Seminary advancement and became chief advancement officer in January 2026. During his tenure, he cultivated relationships with alumni, congregations, donors, and community partners and helped secure philanthropic support for the Seminary's mission and long-term sustainability.

"I believe every child deserves the opportunity to discover their gifts in a community where they are deeply known, loved, and encouraged," Fischer said. "The Episcopal School of Pittsburgh will be a place where academic excellence and joyful learning are paired with compassion,

faith, and meaningful relationships. We are building more than a school. We are creating a community where children and families can flourish together."

As founding head of school, Fischer will lead the school's planning, fundraising, curriculum development, community engagement, and preparations for opening. The school will combine strong academics with social-emotional learning, enrichment opportunities, family engagement, and long-term mentorship. Rooted in the Episcopal tradition, it will welcome families of all faiths and backgrounds and honor the dignity of every person.

"The appointment of Charles Fischer represents an exciting new chapter for this important ministry," said the Rt. Rev. Ketlen A. Solak, bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh. "His leadership, vision, and commitment to children and families embody the values at the heart of Episcopal education. We are grateful for his willingness to lead this work and excited for what lies ahead."

An Episcopal priest, Fischer is a graduate of Morehouse College and Virginia Theological Seminary. Before joining Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, he held advancement and alumni relations positions in higher education and served Episcopal congregations in the dioceses of Atlanta, Maryland, and Washington, D.C. He is an honorary priest associate at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Mt. Lebanon and serves as priest-in-charge at the Church of the Holy Cross in Homewood.

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About The Episcopal School of Pittsburgh

The Episcopal School of Pittsburgh is a new tuition-free Episcopal elementary school scheduled to open in fall 2027 at the Church of the Holy Cross in Pittsburgh's Homewood community. Rooted in the Episcopal values of dignity, belonging, compassion, and academic excellence, the school will provide a joyful and inclusive learning community where children flourish through exceptional education, caring relationships, and strong partnerships with families and the broader community.