

March 2020

Sixth Sense

From the Pastor

Jesus' famous parable of the prodigal son is a story about returning, which makes it an ideal story to meditate on in the Lenten season. I have come to realize the need for returning over and over again. We are always beginning again. For example, my life drifts from God. I have to return. My heart moves away from my first love of God and neighbor. I have to return. My mind wanders. I return, yet again. Returning is a life-long struggle that is renewed each Lent.

The wayward son had rather selfish motivations when he returned to the family farm. He returned simply to survive. He had discovered that his way was leading him to death. He realized he had sinned, but this realization came because sin had brought him to ruin. He wanted sin to lead him to riches and success and freedom.

I am struck by the fact that the father in the story requires no motivation for his youngest son's return. The parent's love is so total and unconditional that he receives his son back whatever his motivation. Which is encouraging for me! God does not demand a pure heart before God embraces us. Even if we return only because our desires have failed to bring us happiness, God will take us back. Even if we return because drifting has brought us less peace than being faithful, God receives us. Even if we return because our sins did not offer as much satisfaction as we had hoped, God takes us back. Even if we return because we could not make it on our own, God receives us. God's love does not ask questions. God is glad to see us home and wants to give us all what we desire, just for being home.

May we always remember this as we make our Lenten journey.

Vincent



SIXTH
presbyterian
CHURCH

March Worship and Preaching

March 1 – Genesis 2:15-17,
3:1-7, “Eden: A Revisionist
History”

March 8 – Erin Angeli,
Guest Preaching

March 15 – John 4:1-26, “It’s
About Us”

March 22 – John 9:1-45,
“Someone to Blame”

March 29 – John 11:1-45,
“Without a Net”

What the Pastor Is Reading

*The Christian Imagination:
Theology and the Origins of
Race*, Willie James Jennings

*Dorothy Day: The World Will
Be Saved By Beauty: An
Intimate Portrait of My
Grandmother*, Kate Hennessy

*The Club: Johnson, Boswell,
and the Friends Who Shaped
an Age*, Leo Damrosch

Safety at Sixth Church

We have updated our Emergency and Disaster Response Plan and have begun training staff, teachers, and church leaders. Our plan identifies two Evacuation Meeting Locations. In case of an emergency and the need to evacuate the building, children will be led by teachers and staff out the most easily accessible door to the closest designated meeting location. Parents are asked to go directly to designated locations to be connected with their children.

Evacuation Meeting Locations

Location 1: Carnegie Library (parking lot or inside), 5801 Forbes Avenue

Location 2: Condominium Garage (inside), 1680 Murray Avenue

Parents: If your child has sensory, behavioral, or medical needs, please fill the Children's Individual Emergency and Lockdown Plan available on our church website. This will help us better aid your child in the case of an emergency. The Children's Individual Emergency and Lockdown Plan and Sunday School Registration forms can be found at www.Sixthchurch.org.

Do we have your current recent cell phone number and email address? Please update your contact information if needed!



Youth Group Happenings, March

Sunday School – Sunday school class for junior and senior high will be held each week (10 - 10:45 am) upstairs in Jenny Newman's new office. Come for discussion on the week's scripture passages, current events, and other assorted topics. There is always hot chocolate!

Youth Fellowship – Youth are invited for games, snacks, and discussion from 6 to 7:30 on Thursdays:

March 12 at the church

March 19 at the church

March 26 at Crazy Mocha (Murray Ave.)

Movie Night: Saturday, March 21, 6 pm at church

Questions? Contact Jenny Newman at (412) 720-6392 or Jennyrunew@gmail.com

Better Know a Committee: Gun Safety

Want to get involved in the life of the church, but aren't sure where to start? This Q&A is the fourth in a series to help make committee information more accessible to congregants. Completed Q&As will also be compiled on the Sixth website.

What does the Gun Committee do? The Sixth Presbyterian Gun Safety Committee is part of a growing community of individuals and organizations that works to address gun violence. We realize that this heartbreaking problem is going to require the persistent effort of many, many people if we are to effect change. We are committed to that effort.

Who might be interested in joining? Anyone who is interested in addressing gun violence.

What is the time commitment? We meet every two months, after church at 12:15, and try mightily to keep to one hour. Our next meeting will be on March 22 after worship at 12:15.

How does someone get involved? Contact Lori Swensson (412 414-5317) or Judy Schryer (412 225-5790)

Family Overnight Retreat 2020



May 9-10

Sixth families are invited for a time of fun and fellowship at Camp Crestfield. Plan to arrive at Camp Crestfield at 10 am Saturday and we will conclude with a casual worship service on Sunday morning.

Families will be staying in Scott Lodge and meals will include lunch and dinner Saturday and breakfast on Sunday. We will have a campfire, a hayride and other activities including rock climbing and canoes.

To register, please fill out the registration form below and return it with payment to Jenny Newman in the church office by **Sunday, April 19**. You can also pay and register online through E-Gives using the link on our church website at www.sixthchurch.org

Questions? Contact Jenny at 412-720-6392 or Jenny@sixthchurch.org.

Retreat Registration

Names: *(Please list all family members attending and ages of children)*

Please list any dietary or physical restrictions for any of your family members attending:

Amount Paid _____

Contact Information (Phone, email)

Cost:

- \$135 for families of 2
- \$160 for families of 3
- \$185 for families of 4 or more

Note: The actual cost of the retreat 75.75 per person for ages 11 and up, \$35.25 per person for ages 5 to 10. Children age 4 and under are free. If the actual cost for your family is less than the amount listed above, please pay the lower amount! You are also very welcome to pay for the actual cost for those in your family attending if you are able.

We have financial help available if needed. Contact Jenny Newman for more info.

Adult Education, Sundays at 10 am in the Parlor

March 1 – Ruth Kittner, “An Update from Wilkinsburg Community Ministries”: WCM Executive Director, Ruth Kittner will share the particular challenges the Wilkinsburg community currently is facing.

March 15 – Jamaal Craig, “PIIN in 2020”: Jamaal Craig will share the upcoming work for the Pennsylvania Interfaith Impact Network: criminal justice reform, counteracting voter suppression, and turning out voters of conscience

March 22 – Inquirer Class: Would you like to learn more about Sixth? Our ministries, structure, outreach? Would you like to meet others who have been visiting regularly? Do you want to learn more about how to become a member and what membership in a church means? Join us!

March 29 – Terri Minor Spencer, “My Experience with the Criminal Justice System”: Terri Minor, the Executive Director of P.O.W.E.R. (Providing Opportunities with Effective Resources, will share her work with returning citizens.

Every Sunday, Bible Study with Bill Guy (Chapel): The adult Bible class examines books of the Bible in detail and in depth. Particular attention is paid to the way verses of the Bible have been translated or mis-translated from Hebrew and from Greek. Free wheeling discussions about the meaning of Biblical passages and the significance of such passages for a person’s life are the norm. This group has fun.

Notes from the February Session Meeting

(NB: notes from Session are pulled from yet-approved minutes)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Minutes from the 1/29/20 Session meeting and the 2/2/2020 Congregational meeting were presented to the Session with the following modifications:
 - Correction of Session classes, correction of meeting attendance, correction of communion dates and correction of spelling errors.
- **Motion to approve** January Session minutes and February congregational meeting minutes with proposed corrections
 - **Motion passed** unanimously

CLERK’S REPORT

- Worship Attendance: 2/2: 138; 2/9:125; 2/16:146; 2/23: 130

DISASTER PLAN REVIEW

Jenny Newman presented the disaster plan to the session for updating and review. During this presentation, the session members discussed the plan, corrected the facility map and reviewed pew cards. The pew cards explain the disaster plan and emergency meeting locations. Jenny Newman will be completing a moment for mission to share the disaster plan with the congregation on 3/1/2020.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- FINANCE: No questions or comments at this time.
- HOUSE: Leslie Kaplan reviewed the capital campaign house projects that will be completed in 2020. These include renovations in the chapel, fixing the accessibility ramp, improving accessibility to the second floor and ongoing work on the stained glass windows.
 - Greg Winner reviewed regular maintenance house projects that include fixing recent roof damage.

- Greg Winner introduced a request from Tree Pittsburgh to plant a tree for the 50 year anniversary of Earth day.
 - **Motion to permit, if the way be clear,** Tree Pittsburgh to plant in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of Earth Day a shade tree.
 - **Motion passed** unanimously
- PERSONNEL: No questions or comments at this time.
- STEWARDSHIP & CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATES: Those who have pledged yet not made a payment on their capital campaign commitments will be contacted.

PASTORAL CARE UPDATES & DEACONS' REPORT

A brief update was provided to Session regarding members of the congregation who require care and assistance.

PRESBYTERY REPORT

The Presbytery Report provided by Pam Howe was reviewed. The session had no questions or concerns based upon the information provided.

OLD BUSINESS

- Letter regarding White Supremacy
 - The session discussed the information provided by Vincent in a follow up meeting with United Methodist Church (UMC) member related to the letter regarding White Supremacy.
- **Motion to refer** to Justice Core Team for recommendation to approve/alter/reject letter to condemn white supremacy from UMC
 - **Motion passed** unanimously

NEW BUSINESS (5 minutes)

- Session Restructuring: Rev. Vincent Kolb provided an initial proposal detailing how to restructure committees, the Session and the deacons at Sixth Presbyterian church. The proposal included changing the number of members of each group, altering the rotation schedule, and changing specific committee responsibilities and mission. The session will continue to discuss this proposal and other potential restructuring ideas at the March session meeting
- FutureCast: The FutureCast process for the Children and Youth ministry at Sixth Presbyterian will continue in March 2020.
- Earth Care: Earth Care committee is requesting that the worship service on 4/19/2020 be focused on Earth care in order to celebrate the 50th anniversary. This would include a guest preacher, to be named later.
- **Motion to approve** centering worship on 4/19/2020 on earth care in honor of 50th anniversary of Earth day with a guest preacher to be named later.
 - **Motion passed** unanimously
- **Motion to approve** the following Adult Education presenters/presentation :
 - Ruth Kittner on 3/1/2020
 - Jamaal Craig on 3/15/2020
 - Inquirers class on 3/22/2020
 - Terri Minor Spencer on 3/29/2020
 - **All motions passed** unanimously
- **Motion to approve** the following speaker for the Church and Community Committee:
 - Juan Roberto Melendez on 3/4/2020 at 7pm.
 - **Motion passed** unanimously
- Christian Education: All members of Session are mandated reporters.
 - Session members were reminded that they need to update their compliance. Jenny Newman will be sending a link to provide training to session members.

NEXT MEETING: March 25, 2020 at 7 pm

March 2020 – Events and Birthdays

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10:00 am, Sunday School 11:00 am, Worship 12:15 pm, More Light Committee 8:00 pm, NA	2 7:00 pm, NA	3 7:00 pm, OCD Support Group	4 Pam Howe Katie Kaplan 11:00 am, Bible Study 4:00 pm, Condo Association 7:30 pm, Juan Roberto Melendez speaking	5 12:00 pm, Pittsburgh Calligraphy 6:00 pm, Youth Group (Church) 7:30 pm, Choir Rehearsal	6	7 7:00 pm, NA
8 Jordan Lowe Greg Nestor 10:00 am, Sunday School 11:00 am, Worship 12:15 pm, Earth Care 8:00 pm, NA	9 Linda Davoli 7:00 pm, NA	10 7:00 pm, OCD Support Group	11 11:00 am, Bible Study 7:00 pm, 14th Ward Democrats	12 12:00 pm, Pittsburgh Calligraphy 6:00 pm, Youth Group (Church) 7:30 pm, Choir Rehearsal	13 Joseph DeLucia	14 7:00 pm, NA
15 10:00 am, Sunday School 11:00 am, Worship 12:15 pm, Stewardship Committee 8:00 pm, NA	16 7:00 pm, NA	17 Wilson Juring Glenda Rosenberry Rohan Vaux 7:00 pm, OCD Support Group	18 11:00 am, Bible Study 7:00 pm, Deacons	19 12:00 pm, Pittsburgh Calligraphy 6:00 pm, Youth Group (Church) 7:00 pm, Choir Rehearsal	20	21 Winter Cornelius- Bates 6:00 pm, Youth Group Movie Night 7:00 pm, NA

March 2020 – Events and Birthdays

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
22 10:00 am, Sunday School 11:00 am, Worship 12:00 pm, Gun Safety 12:30 pm, Usher Training 8:00 pm, NA	23 7:00 pm, NA	24 7:00 pm, OCD Support Group	25 Emma Cooper 11:00 am, Bible Study 7:00 pm, Session	26 Malakai Whipple 12:00 pm, Pittsburgh Calligraphy 6:00 pm, Youth Group (Crazy Mocha) 7:00 pm, Choir Rehearsal	27	28 7:00 pm, NA
29 10:00 am, Sunday School 11:00 am, Worship 12:30 pm, Usher Training 2:00 pm, Alopecia Support Group 8:00 pm, NA	30 7:00 pm, NA	31 Jeffery Kaplan 7:00 pm, OCD Support Group				

Coffee for Sale!

We have coffee for sale! Stop by the church office to buy a bag of coffee from our mission partners in El Porvenir!

Regular or dark roast ground or whole bean: **\$13**

Decaf ground or whole bean: **\$14**



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office@sixthchurch.org
www.sixthchurch.org

**Dated Material – Do Not Hold
Address Service Requested**



We are an open and affirming community of faith in Jesus Christ. At home in an urban neighborhood of many faiths, we acknowledge that we are not alone on the path to understanding God. In worship, study, and fellowship, we celebrate our Presbyterian roots and find joy in our diversity. We strive for the grace to love one another as we seek a deeper understanding of life in the Spirit, working for justice and serving as stewards of God's wondrous creation.



The Deadline for the April newsletter is March 15th. Please email articles and announcements to Amy in the church office (office@sixthchurch.org).

You can also put printed copies on her desk.

Thank you!

Food for Thought...

"You are now so fulfilled in your own being, in being alive, in living, in aspiring towards a greater sense of life and a deeper loving," – Katherine Mansfield

"Stay here – through pout or pain or peskiness. Stay here. See what the news is going to be tomorrow." – Gwendolyn Brooks

"When you consider things like the stars, our affairs don't seem to matter very much, do they?" – Virginia Woolf

"There are days we live as if death were nowhere in the background, from joy to joy to joy, from wing to wing, from blossom to blossom to impossible blossom, to sweet impossible blossom." – Li-Young Lee