

November 2022

# Sixth Sense

## From the Pastor

There is much that is wrong in our world. Innocent people suffer. Institutions that we used to trust are teetering on the brink. Violence in our society is pervasive. The planet is warming. We trust that the world God created is beautiful, but it seems to be so broken.

As people of faith, we live in the hope that there is a promised day of God. The promise is that in time, God's love will make right everything that has gone wrong. In time, God's love will heal all that is broken and bruised. All that is good and beautiful and holy will be gathered up – none of it lost.

We say in the church that God is love. **Love is a tender power; it is a vulnerable strength, but the promise of the gospel is that love is also powerful; love will win.** Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. articulated this promise. He often said the moral arc of the universe is long, but it bends toward justice. That's the promise of our faith. It sounds hopeless, but this beautiful and broken world is loved by God, and in God's promised day, all that has gone wrong, God will make right.

At Sixth Presbyterian Church, we witness and serve in the confidence that love will win. We believe that our neighborhood and the whole world needs a faith community to remind them that we were created as human beings to love God and to love one another. I support this faith community financially so that this spiritual practice of loving God and loving neighbor continues in Squirrel Hill.

**The Session has asked us to prayerfully consider adding 3% to our current 2021 commitments and making that commitment (2021 pledge + 3%) our commitment for 2022.** I am going to do more. Because I believe that the witness we are offering in word and deed is vital. I hope you will join me in worship on Sunday, November 13, as we dedicate our financial commitments to this worthy effort: love will win.

Peace!

Vincent

**CDC Community Risk and Worship: masks are required in the building while Allegheny County is in a "medium" or "high" CDC community risk designation; N95 or similar masks are preferred while in "high." Masks are welcome and recommended while in "low."**



SIXTH  
presbyterian  
CHURCH

## November Worship and Preaching

November 6 – Luke 20:27-38, "For All the Saints"

November 13 – Luke 21:5-19, "Love Will Win"

November 20 – Luke 23:32-43, "Nobody Deserved It,"  
Rev. Charissa Howe  
preaching

November 27 – Matthew 24:36-44, "The End of Trouble"



## What the Pastor Is Reading

*The Pope at War: The Secret History of Pius XII, Mussolini, and Hitler*, David Kertzer

*Resilient Ministry: What Pastors Told Us About Surviving and Thriving*, Burns, Chapman, and Guthrie

# Children and Youth Updates

## November Youth Group

(6th grade and up)

**Thursday, November 3:** 6 - 8 p.m. in-person at church

**Thursday, November 10:** Youth volunteering/serving meals at Hot Metal Bridge's The Table. Meet at the church at 4:30 p.m. for transportation with Jenny or meet at Hot Metal Bridge church at 5 p.m. We will be done serving at 7 p.m. (per Hot Metal requirements students must be vaccinated to serve.) You must RSVP to Jenny if will be attending.

**Thursday, November 17:** 6 - 8 p.m. via zoom

**Email [jennyrunew@gmail.com](mailto:jennyrunew@gmail.com) for the zoom link or more info.**



Sixth Presbyterian Church

## Our Sunday School Christmas Pageant

We are excited that for our Sunday School Christmas Pageant this year we will be working with our new music director Dr. Douglas-Jayd Burn to present a service of Lessons and Carols. The service will be at 11 am Sunday, December 11.

All Sunday school students are invited to participate. Rehearsal dates will be Thursdays December 1 and 8 at 6 pm at the church. Students will be reading lessons, singing carols, and yes – we will be utilizing our fabulous costumes. We will also be sharing music and readings for practicing at home very soon. Please email Jenny Newman at [Jennyrunew@gmail.com](mailto:Jennyrunew@gmail.com) to confirm the student's participation.

Students who play instruments and would like to work with Dr. Burns to share their talents during the service are asked to email him at [djburn@sixthchurch.org](mailto:djburn@sixthchurch.org).

## Carols on the Steps

Everyone is invited to kick off the Advent Season and join us for Carols on the Steps at 6:30 pm, Friday, December 2. Join us outside to sing carols and holiday songs together. Caroling will be followed by moving into the chapel for hot chocolate, cookies, and ornament-making for our family Advent tree.

## Family Advent Tree

Beginning with the first Sunday in Advent, an additional Christmas Tree will be placed in the sanctuary. All church members and families are invited to bring an ornament to decorate the tree. Make an ornament together or bring in a family favorite. If you are not attending in-person worship, feel free to send us an ornament or drop one off (please make sure they are marked somewhere with your name.) We are looking forward to seeing our tree come to life!



# MEMORIAL TO THE LOST

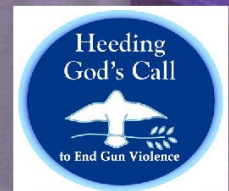


## T-SHIRT DISPLAY AND REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2 PM  
SIXTH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

We come together as one community of faith to honor those lost to gun murders and to demand stronger and effective gun laws and regulations.

This Gun Violence Awareness Day is working to end gun violence, support sensible gun laws, and eliminate illegal handguns from our community





# CROP HUNGER WALK

## ENDING HUNGER ONE STEP AT A TIME



The 2022 CROP Hunger Walk was a very successful event, and the Sixth Church team made a significant contribution. This year's walk, on October 9, was dedicated to the memory of Maggie Ritchey, who was one of our most loyal and enthusiastic walkers for many years.

The full results are not in, but we know that the Sixth Church team raised more than \$9,500, dedicated mostly for the programs of Church World Service but with a smaller component reserved for the food support services of Wilkinsburg Community Ministry.

Church World Service has development programs around the world, aimed at helping people become more self-sufficient in ways that will alleviate hunger. CWS also works with refugee resettlement and disaster relief.

We have many people to thank for the success of our Walk. Besides our walkers, we thank John Guinther for being a crossing guard, Lauren Ward for the Moment for Mission, and Leslie Wilson from CWS, who spoke to us about her work with settling Afghan refugees. We thank walkers April Clisura, Cliff Johnson, Jenny Newman, Lauren Ward, Leila Richards, Lynn Kawaratani, Myra Kazanjian, Pamela Twiss, Nora Johnson, Peter Koehler, Sean Evans, Sue Koehler, and Vincent Kolb. And we thank so many generous donors who helped us reach our financial goal and beyond. Your money will be well used.

—Pam Twiss and Sue Koehler

## Upcoming Visit from Mission Co-Worker Chenoa Stock

Chenoa Stock, a Mission Co-Worker of the PC (USA), will soon be visiting Sixth Presbyterian Church! Chenoa is from Pittsburgh, PA, and is daughter of retired PC (USA) pastors, Revs. Carleton and Elinor Stock. She will be joining us in worship on Sunday, November 20th, and will share a Minute for Mission about her call to ministry. Following worship, she will present in the Chapel at 12:15 pm, to share more deeply about serving in Peru with the accompaniment program, PERUSA. She will present on the country context, past and present, as well as the ongoing ministries of our partners, as they look toward post-pandemic times. Come and join to learn more about Peru and what God is doing through our global partners there. If you'd like to support Chenoa and her accompaniment of this ministry, please consider giving at this website: <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/missionconnections/chenoa-stock/>



See you on the 20th!

# Help the Church and Save Money at the Same Time

Since it is Stewardship season, I wanted to share something with you that I learned this year. If you need to take a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from your Individual Retirement Account (IRA) or 401K account, there is a way you can help the church and save money on taxes. Annual RMD's are required once you are 72 years old, or if you inherited an IRA/401K from someone who was not your spouse (a caveat here, you need to check with your financial advisor to determine what the RMD is for your unique situation).

Normally you have to pay federal taxes on your RMD as income. But if the distribution is made directly to a charity, that amount is not added to your adjusted gross income, so no federal taxes are due on the amount given to the charity. This benefits you if you don't itemize and can't deduct the charitable contribution. In addition, keeping some or all of your RMD out of your adjusted gross income could help you avoid the Medicare high-income surcharge or help make less of your Social Security benefits taxable.

I have an inherited IRA from my mother, and for 2022 I contacted my financial advisor to make a "Qualified Charitable Distribution" (QCD) from that inherited IRA directly to Sixth Church. The amount of the charitable distribution counted towards my 2022 RMD. So I was able to use this distribution to satisfy my 2022 pledge to Sixth, and also will save money because I won't owe federal taxes on that amount for 2022.

My IRA custodian required some electronic paperwork to make this happen, and sent me the check made out to Sixth Presbyterian Church, which I forwarded on to the church. You'll need to contact your advisor to determine what the procedures are for the financial company you work with.

—Linda May

## November Birthdays

November 3 ..... Andrew DeJong

Alice Scales

November 5 ..... Mary Crossley

Zylphia Ford

November 6 ..... Megan Fogt

November 15.....Joan Gaul

November 16.....Grace Brennan

Brian Lazarus

November 17.....Peter Gilmore

November 21.....Bob Robinson-Dassel

November 22.....Cosy Cornelius-Bates

November 23.....Lucy Brennan

November 25.....Laura Sindhi

November 27.....Elena Berg

Robin Holtje

November 29.....Dan Brennan



# Notes from the October Session Meeting

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

## CLERK'S REPORT:

- Worship attendance: 10/2, 85 (in-person), 38 (YouTube); 10/9, 77 (in-person), 50 (YouTube); 10/16, 76 (in-person), 36 (YouTube); 10/23, 77 (in-person), 33 (YouTube)
- Reading of the Minutes: Kathi Robinson-Dassel, as Clerk of Session, attended the annual Examination of 2021 Session Minutes at Pittsburgh Presbytery. Sixth Presbyterian minutes were approved with three exceptions, which included not creating an Audit Committee, Nominating Committee not elected at a 2021 Congregational Meeting, and no noted Insurance Review. The Examination of the Rolls and Registers was approved with commendation.
- The Pastor performed the wedding of Paul Merrill Watt-Morse and Alexandra Doreen Illescas Hernandez at PPG Wintergarden, on October 15, 2022.

## APPROVED BUILDING REQUEST:

- The House Committee and Pastor approved the request of the Day School at the Children's Institute to use space at Sixth on Wednesday, October 19, 2022, 3:30-4:30 p.m.

## OMNIBUS MOTION:

Following a short discussion to clarify two of the motions, Elder Tom Juring moved to approve the Omnibus Motion. It was seconded and passed unanimously.

- **Motion** to approve the minutes of the Session Stated Meeting, September 28, 2022.
- **Motion** to approve our annual holiday dinner on Sunday, December 11, 2022, immediately following worship, trusting that the Fellowship Committee will plan appropriately if COVID numbers spike.
- **Motion** to approve the following educational/speaker events, 2022-2023, dates to be determined: Dr. Mary Radcliffe, Election Review; Rev. Chad Collins, Israel/Palestine; Dr. Mary Crossley, *Embodying Justice* book presentation; Dr. Caitlin Schroering, Indigenous Movement to Protect Water Rights.
- **Motion** to approve Carol Emerson as Elder Commissioner to Presbytery, December 8, 2022.
- **Motion** to approve special Session meeting on Wednesday, November 30, 2022 (likely via Zoom), for the purpose of dividing up follow-up calls for the Stewardship campaign, as well as a review of October financials, and election of Chair of the Nominating Committee.

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

- **FINANCE:** Ruling Elder Frank Davoli, Finance Chair, presented highlights of the Financial and Treasurer's Report.
  - Reminder from Church Treasurer, Erik Fogt, that we need to have a current Certificate of Insurance from any contractors doing work at the church.
  - The third quarter draw down from the trust account has been transferred into the bank account.

- Pledges continue to be below budget, overall, around \$13,670 below expected YTD.
- Non-pledge giving continues to be significant, difficult to project in budget.
- Church and Community distributions are almost complete.
- The completed Audit Report will be shared at next month's meeting. Elder Davoli reported that there are no surprises and the review went well.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Committee reports were referenced for review.

#### DEACON CARE LIST:

- The Deacon Care List was referenced and updated by Rev. Kolb

#### OVERTURE TO PRESBYTERY ON BEHALF OF BETHEL AME:

- Following a discussion regarding the postponement of the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading and vote on the overture until the February meeting of Presbytery, Session members agreed that delaying the vote is the wise decision, if Bethel AME leaders agree.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

- **Meeting Schedule for November/January** proposed by Rev. Kolb. There were no objections
  - As agreed, Session Meeting, Wednesday, November 30, 2022 primarily for division of Stewardship calls and other end-of-year issues.
  - Executive Committee Meeting with Committee Chairs, Wednesday, January 11 or 18, 2023, 7 p.m. to craft a proposed budget motion for the Session to approve at the Stated Meeting.
  - Session Meeting, January 25, 2023, 7 p.m., primary purpose to approve the 2023 budget, prepare the proposed Terms of Call for the Pastor to the congregation.
  - Congregational Meeting, Sunday, January 29, Noon, to approve the terms of call for the Pastor.
- **Mask Mandate** going forward. Elder Pam Howe raised the question about COVID rates and how long Sixth would continue to request/require masks, depending upon the local rates, especially during low and medium rates. **The Worship Committee** will discuss and propose a revised policy during their meeting on November 6.
- A reminder that the **Memorial to the Lost** service will take place on Sunday, 2 p.m. The shirts were all successfully placed on the lawn, with many hands to help. Many thanks to all, especially to Leslie Kaplan (and Peter) for marking the spots for the posts to be placed and to Judy Schryer for organizing the crew. A reminder, as well, to invite others to attend the Sunday service.

**NEXT MEETING:** Wednesday, November 30, 2022, 7 p.m., likely via Zoom.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathi Robinson-Dassel, Clerk of Session



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*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 December newsletter is November 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...

*"Perhaps the World Ends Here" Joy Harjo*

The world begins at a kitchen table.  
No matter what, we must eat to live.

The gifts of earth are brought and prepared, set on the table. So it has been since creation, and it will go on.

We chase chickens or dogs away from it. Babies teethe at the corners. They scrape their knees under it.

It is here that children are given instructions on what it means to be human. We make men at it, we make women.

At this table we gossip, recall enemies and the ghosts of lovers.

Our dreams drink coffee with us as they put their arms around our children. They laugh with us at

our poor falling-down selves and as we put ourselves back together once again at the table.

This table has been a house in the rain, an umbrella in the sun.

Wars have begun and ended at this table. It is a place to hide in the shadow of terror. A place to celebrate the terrible victory.

We have given birth on this table, and have prepared our parents for burial here.

At this table we sing with joy, with sorrow. We pray of suffering and remorse. We give thanks.

Perhaps the world will end at the kitchen table, while we are laughing and crying, eating of the last sweet bite.