

December 2022

# Sixth Sense

## From the Pastor

As we ponder all that has been in 2022, and all that we hope the future to be, this prayer from Walter Breuggemann for the Advent season guides my musings:

“Newborn Beginning...After Caesar”

And while we wait for the Christ Child,  
we are enthralled by the things of Caesar -  
money ... power ... control  
and all the well-being that comes from  
such control, even if it requires violence

But in the midst of the decree will come this long-expected Jesus  
innocent, vulnerable,  
full of grace and truth,  
grace and not power,  
truth and not money,  
mercy and not control.

We also dwell in the land of Caesar;  
we pray for the gift of your spirit,  
that we may loosen our grip on the things of Caesar,  
that we may turn our eyes toward the babe,  
our ears towards the newness,  
our hearts toward the gentleness,  
our power and money and control  
toward your new governance.

—from *Prayers for a Privileged People*, 2008: p. 37

Happy Advent!

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 while in “low.”**



SIXTH  
*presbyterian*  
CHURCH

## December Worship and Preaching

December 4 – Matthew 3:1-12, “The Right Nightmares”

December 11 – Children’s Pageant Lessons and Carols

December 18 – Matthew 1:18-25, “God in the Ordinary”

December 24 – Luke 2:1-20, “Love Came Down”

December 25 – Christmas Day Pre-Recorded Online Service, John 1:1-5, “Holy Evolution”



## What the Pastor Is Reading

*Unprotected*, Billy Porter

# Children and Youth Updates

## December Youth Group

(6th grade and up)

**Thursday, Dec 1:** 6 p.m. Christmas pageant/Lessons and Carols practice in the sanctuary.

**Thursday, Dec. 8:** 6 p.m. Christmas pageant/Lessons and Carols practice in the sanctuary.

**Sunday, Dec. 11:** 10 a.m. rehearsal. 11 a.m. Lessons and Carol service.

**Thursday, Dec. 15:** 6 - 7:30 p.m. In-person Christmas gathering in Chapel. Please bring a wrapped gift to exchange that cost \$5 or less.

Email [jennyrunew@gmail.com](mailto:jennyrunew@gmail.com) for more info

Sixth Presbyterian Church

### Coffee for Sale

Friends! We have ground regular and decaf coffee from our mission partners at El Porvenir available for sale in the church office. Prices are \$14 per bag for regular and \$15 for decaf. Stop in the office during office hours or after church on Sundays to get some! You can also purchase coffee anytime online at [www.BuildingNewHope.org](http://www.BuildingNewHope.org)



### 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!

## Sunday School

There will be no Sunday school or Extended Session on **December 25 and January 1**. The worship service on December 25 will be online only. Visit our website to access the service link.



## December Birthdays

December 4 .....	Douglas-Jayd Burn	December 18.....	Mark Bertolet
December 5 .....	Alexandra DeJong	December 20.....	Louis DeLucia
December 8 .....	Keith Gillogly		Carolyn Freeman
December 11.....	Nils Hammer	December 24.....	Carol Emerson
	Peter Watt-Morse	December 29.....	Jesse DeLucia
December 12.....	Mary Ellen Watt-Morse		Ethan Greenley
December 14.....	Jack Brennan		Allison Sennott
	Jacob Watt-Morse		Carlisle Turner
December 15.....	Lara Miller		Sterling Turner
December 16.....	Ellen Gaul	December 30.....	Benjamin Bates
	Joan Markert		



## Our next Single-Use Plastic (SUP) pickup at church is on December 20th

April Clisura has generously volunteered to drive and will be there to collect your SUP. If you would like your plastics to be included, please bring them on the 16th or arrange with April by email at [april.clisura@gmail.com](mailto:april.clisura@gmail.com). Please message April ahead of time so that she knows how much plastic you have for her.

### WHAT TO BRING:

- Numbered Single-Use Plastic (SUP), numbers 1 to 7, which means that only plastic that has a number within the chasing arrows recycle symbol. No unnumbered and unknown SUP is acceptable.
- Please sort the numbered plastic into #1 in its own container, #2 in its own container, and #3-7 can be combined in one container.

Please use the following guide to prepare your plastics for our lovely volunteer:

1. Wash all your SUP so that it's oil- and food-free.
2. Deliver your clean SUP in brown paper bags or cardboard boxes.
3. Label your bags and boxes with your name and the number of plastic that is in the container
4. Leave your bags and boxes in the hallway near the parking lot door

## Dedication Sunday

Right: Love Will Win! The splendid Dedication Sunday table.

Below: The Dedication Sunday clean-up crew: Barb Pares, Leslie Kaplan, Lori King, Beth Hazlett, and Linda May (not pictured: Peter Kaplan)



# A Note from the Stewardship Chair

During my college years, I toyed with the idea of becoming a reporter, and had two co-op jobs writing for weekly newspapers. I tried, not always successfully, to follow the classic journalistic dictum, “*don’t bury the lede!*” – that is, put the main points of the story in the opening sentence. In that spirit, here’s the lede:

**Please submit your 2023 pledge to support Sixth Church as soon as you can, and if you’ve already sent in your pledge, thank you.**

That’s the lede – here are the how and why:

## How:

There are three easy ways you can submit your pledge:

- Detach the pledge card that was part of the Stewardship Brochure you received in the mail, fill it out, and mail it to Sixth Church.
- Fill out your pledge card, bring it to Church on Sunday, and put the card in the collection plate during the offering.
- Email Amy Whipple ([officesixthchurch@gmail.com](mailto:officesixthchurch@gmail.com)) with your annual pledge amount.

## Why:

There are so many reasons that we belong and give to Sixth Church, and many of them are highly personal. Here are some reasons for giving that apply to all of us:

- Your pledges make up nearly 80% of our revenue. If we don’t know in advance how much revenue we can expect, we can’t create a budget to plan for our expenses, creating uncertainty for our staff and the church programs that we value.
- Our Stewardship message this year has been “*Love Will Win,*” and your pledges will help bring love’s triumph closer to reality on earth. We help neighbors in need, work to promote our values of justice and inclusion, and offer a warm welcome to all who want to hear God’s message of love. We also love and support each other as we sustain our cherished faith community.

As you read in the Stewardship brochure, we believe that our 2023 budget needs to include a 3% increase over 2022. This increase is necessary to continue and enhance the livestreaming of our Sunday service, to pay increases in staff salaries and benefits, and to address the cost increases of today’s economy. We ask that you to prayerfully consider adding 3% to your current 2022 pledge and make that your commitment for 2023.

## Progress Report:

On Sunday, November 13, we dedicated the pledges we’ve received thus far. The Stewardship and Fellowship Committees collaborated on a post-dedication celebration featuring cake, fresh fruit, and drinks. Thanks to Fellowship Committee members Lori King, Linda May, and Barb Parees, and to Fellowship Chair Jan Myers-Newbury for crucial advice on cake selection. Leslie Kaplan provided festive table decorations.

The initial results of the Stewardship Campaign are encouraging. As of November 30<sup>th</sup>, we’ve received pledges which equal 79% of our Stewardship Goal of \$358,037. We hope that with your pledge, we can meet our goal so that we can continue and grow Sixth Church’s mission of love.

Peter Kaplan for the Stewardship Committee

Beth Hazlett, Patty Halverson, Barb Parees, and the Reverend Dr. Vincent Kolb

# Notes from the Session Meeting will return!

## Midterms Post-Mortem with Mary

Join our own Dr. Mary Radcliffe from FiveThirtyEight for a review of what was learned and what was missed by the pre-election polling and punditry on Tuesday, December 6, at 7 pm via Zoom. Sponsored by the Justice Team of Sixth, Mary would prefer to design the class in direct response to your questions about the 2022 election. Submit as many questions as you like by 12/1 through this link: <https://forms.gle/QGnAx6EjjRihnbb67>. Contact the church office for the Zoom link.

## Memorial to the Lost

In late October and into November, Sixth hosted the Memorial to the Lost t-shirt display, which included almost 90 shirts with the names, ages, and death dates of those killed by gun violence in Allegheny County in the past year, of which there have been over 110. On October 30, there was also a remembrance service, featuring moving testimony from Crystal Coates, whose son died by gun violence.

Many thanks to the Gun Safety Committee for organizing the display, service, and letters for people to sign and send to their elected officials. Many additional thanks to all who helped set up, take down, and otherwise make the awareness event a powerful success.





## Candlelight Vigil

First United Methodist Church and  
the Pittsburgh Equality Center  
invite you to honor the victims of the  
**Club Q** shooting.

PGH  
**EQUALITY**  
CENTER

We Call Attention to the Rise in Anti-LGBTQ+ Hate and Gun Violence

Wednesday December 7, 2022 6:00 pm

Outdoors at the Corner of Centre Avenue and South Aiken Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15232



Used by permission

*We must rise against hate in the strongest possible terms, we must stand together in solidarity and love with our LGBTQ+ family in Colorado Springs and demand an end to this epidemic of gun violence.* Kelley Robinson, HRC

We stand among this incredible cloud of witnesses and today proclaim:

Where hatred roars, we will sing of love.

Where fear stalks, we will stand with courage.

Where bigotry rages, we will call for justice.

Where pain overwhelms, we will extend kind comfort.

Where systems oppress, we will work for change.

Now and ever, now and ever, now and evermore.

For more information: [info@pghequalitycenter.org](mailto:info@pghequalitycenter.org)

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**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 January newsletter is December 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...

“On the days and nights when I believe this story that we call Christianity, I cannot entirely make sense of the storyline: God trusted God’s very self, totally and completely and in full bodily form, to the care of a woman. God needed women for survival. Before Jesus fed us with the bread and the wine, the body and the blood, Jesus himself needed to be fed, by a woman. He needed a woman to say: This is my body, given for you.” – Rachel Held Evans

“She recognized the strange happiness that came from loving something without knowing why you did, that strange happiness that was sometimes so big that it felt like sadness. It was the way she felt when she looked at the stars.” – Maggie Stiefvater

“I know now, after fifty years, that the finding/losing, forgetting/remembering, leaving/returning, never stops. The whole of life is about another chance, and while we are alive, till the very end, there is always another chance.” – Jeanette Winterson

“Our real journey in life is interior: It is a matter of growth, deepening, and of an even greater surrender to the creative action of love and grace in our hearts.” – Thomas Merton