

June 2023

Sixth Sense

From the Pastor

Friends,

Thank you for such a warm welcome! I am delighted to spend these summer months with you all, while at the same time heartbroken that my friend and colleague cannot continue in his role for a season.

Given my part-time temporary status, I am clearing my schedule to make myself available to you all on Tuesdays/Wednesdays/Thursdays with Fridays being my day off. Please make good use of my email and cell phone, if there is something that needs my attention or pastoral care (sarahrobbins1025@gmail.com or 412.715.3207).

I look forward to getting to know you all and folding into this community of faith that I have admired for the last 15 years in this presbytery. It is such a joy to serve a More Light congregation, if only temporarily.

A bit about me:

My spouse, Rev. Ben Robbins and I will celebrate 20 years of marriage this month. He has been serving as the Head of Staff at Northmont United Presbyterian Church in the North Hills for the last five years. Our 7 year old, Liam, is about to finish 1st grade and is constantly on the move. We thoroughly enjoy any new adventures together and can be seen regularly eating ice cream in Frick park near our home in Squirrel Hill.

I am always on the search for the next British detective series to enjoy, time to kayak or get coffee with friends.

Please let me know if you would like a visit, a phone call or a walk sometime soon!

Peace,
Pastor Sarah



SIXTH
presbyterian
CHURCH

June Worship and Preaching

June 4 – “God in Three” (Worship in the Park)

June 11 – Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26, “Wellness Check”

June 18 – Kate Davoli preaching (More Light Sunday)

June 25 – Matthew 10:24-39, “I Will If You Will”

What the Pastor Is Reading

Rest Is Resistance: A Manifesto, Tricia Hersey

Upcoming Book Study Opportunity

The Justice Committee will host a book study of Matthew Desmond’s *Poverty by America*, Tuesday evenings on July 25, August 8, and August 22. Look for more information in the July/August newsletter.

(6th grade and up)

June Youth Group

Thursday, June 1 : 6 -7:30 p.m. In-person at the church.

Thursday, June 8: Youth volunteering/serving meals at Hot Metal Bridge's The Table from 5 to 7 p.m. / Meet at the church at 4:30 p.m. for transportation with Jenny or meet at Hot Metal. You must RSVP to Jenny if you will be attending.

Sundays on the Lawn, June 25 : 5 -7: p.m. Everyone is invited to gather for games and activities. Please bring blankets and/or lawn chairs and your own picnic dinner. We will provide snacks and beverages. In case of rain, we will gather in the chapel.

VBS volunteers needed! June 26-30: We will be collaborating with East Liberty Presbyterian Church this year. Changemaker Lab VBS will be held 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at ELPC. Youth in 6th -12th are invited to sign up as volunteers. Please email Jenny for the registration link.

Sixth Presbyterian Church

For more info email Jenny Newman
Jennyrunew@gmail.com

Graduations and Accomplishments

Joe Ashenden has received his clinical doctorate in speech-language pathology from Northwestern University.

Bela Berg is graduating from the Savannah College of Art and Design.

Elise Bertolet is graduating from Allderdice High School and will be attending Bucknell University in the fall.

Daedalus Brockner is graduating from Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School and will be taking courses at CCAC in the fall.

Kate Davoli is graduating with a Masters of Divinity from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

Rachel Rothenberg is receiving her Ph.D. from the University of Washington.

Rachel Todaro, one of our long-time nursery and child care staff, is receiving a doctorate in Occupational Therapy from Chatham University.

Please let us know in the church office if there are any other graduates to celebrate!

Sundays on the Lawn

Sundays on the Lawn will be held from 5 to 7 pm on June 25, July 23, and August 20. Everyone is invited to gather for games and activities. Please bring blankets and/or lawn chairs and your own picnic dinner. We will provide snacks and beverages. In case of rain, we will gather in the chapel.

Please sign up here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0A4BA9AD2CA2FF2-sundays>

Summer Nursery and Extended Session

This Summer Sunday school has concluded for the summer. We will continue to offer childcare for infants and toddlers and Extended Session for preschool through 3rd grade during the 10 am worship service.

Vacation Bible School

It's not too late to sign up for Vacation Bible School! We will be collaborating with East Liberty Presbyterian Church this year. Changemaker Lab VBS will be held June 26-30, 9 am to 3 pm at ELPC for kids in pre-K (age 4 and potty-trained) through grade 5 (completed). Youth in 6th-12th are invited to sign up as volunteers and adult volunteers are needed as well!

To register for VBS or to volunteer here is the link! <https://cathedralofhope.org/ministries-programs/children-youth-ministries/vacation-church-school/>

Live-Stream Helpers Needed

We are seeking some additional helpers to run the live-stream and sound system during our Sunday morning worship. This job requires that the operator turn on the equipment, start the software, step through each item in the service, and make minor adjustments as needed. There is a small stipend offered for performing this service. You will receive training. Contact Kirk Howe at howeks@yahoo.com or 412-343-7438 if you or someone you know is interested.



June Birthdays

June 4 David DeJong

June 8 Kate Kennedy

June 11.....Mary Lang

June 12.....Kate Brennan

Margaret Miller

June 13.....Colin Miller

Andrew Morgan

June 18.....Isabella Berg

Eve Guyette

Rainer Loyd

June 19.....Jean Moore

June 20.....Christine Tyndall

June 22.....Kyle Miller

June 24.....Chris McAdams

June 28.....Lori Swensson

June 29.....Malachi Cornelius-Bates

Liam Greenley



Picnic and Worship in the Park

June 4 at 11 am

**Rhododendron Shelter at
Highland Park**

All are welcome!

We're bringing back the grill!

Grilled hamburgers and hot dogs will be provided, along with buns and all the fixins.

You're bringing your own plates...

In the interest of our efforts to be an Earth Care Congregation, the Fellowship Committee is suggesting that you bring a plastic plate/s from home to use for dining, if you are able to do this. There will be some paper goods available for those who are unable to "bring your own."

Cutlery will be supplied (and subsequently washed) by the Fellowship Committee, as we have done for the past several years.

and side dish, salad, or dessert to share!

Worship will be starting at 11 am. If you are able, it would be good to bring outdoor chairs or a blanket. If you need to unload items, it is fine to drive down close to the shelter, but then we ask you to move your car back to the road (unless this presents mobility difficulties for you). We will provide a few folding chairs.

If anyone is in need of transportation, please let Amy in the office know by Thursday, June 1, and she will get word to the Fellowship chair. Amy can also email a map to you if you need help finding the shelter. However, the easiest way to get there is to travel east on Stanton Ave. (which intersects Highland Ave.). It eventually curves to the left (north) and continues into the park. The shelter is on the right in a very short while — and we'll be so happy to see all of you!



LAMP

LGBTQIA+ AFFIRMING MINISTRIES OF PGH

Our congregation is a proud participant in LAMP – LGBTQIA+ Affirming Ministries of Pittsburgh. We are excited to again celebrate Pride in Pittsburgh this summer. While there are many Pride events sponsored by different groups and in different neighborhoods around the area, the two Pride events LAMP will be participating this year are: Pittsburgh Pride March and Parade coordinated by QBurgh on behalf of TransYouniting and the

Pittsburgh Pride Group on Saturday, June 3 in Downtown and the North Shore.

We will also participate in People's Pride PGH March and Festival on Sunday, June 25 in Swissvale. Keep lookout for more details that are coming soon.

Come out and celebrate while we share God's love with all God's people!

March and Parade

Line up for the march and parade will begin at 10:00 AM at 11th Street and Liberty Avenue downtown near the Strip District. From 11th Street at Liberty Avenue the parade will proceed down Liberty Ave towards 7th Street, turn right on 7th Street and continue across the Andy Warhol Bridge, continue on Sandusky Street, turn left on to South Commons and proceed to Allegheny Commons Park West for the Pittsburgh Pride Festival.

Parade begins at noon. Festival table open from 11am to 9pm.

Volunteer!

Sign up to set up, help with, or clean up the booth: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0e48adab2da4fac25-pride#/>

Notes from the May Session Meeting

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

CLERK'S REPORT:

- Worship Attendance: 4/30, 75 (in-person), 73 (YouTube); 5/7, 77 (in-person), 66 (YouTube); 5/14, 80 (in-person), 49 (YouTube); 5/21, 102 (in-person), 40 (YouTube)
- Baptisms: Nathan Thompson and Kurt Thompson received the Sacrament of Baptism during the Sunday Worship on May 14, 2023, by Rev. Sarah Robbins.
- Ordination/Installation of Officers: On May 21, 2023, Gail Luley was ordained and installed as Deacon, and Marnie Bertolet was installed as Deacon for the Class of 2026. Elliot Hilton and Robin Holtje will be installed as Deacons at a later date. Joan Markert was ordained and installed as Ruling Elder, and Scott Bell, Sara Berg, and Tom Twiss were installed as Ruling Elders for the Class of 2026.
- There was no correspondence or building requests to report.

PASTORAL UPDATE:

As promised, Rev. Robbins shared a brief update about Rev. Vincent Kolb's current response to treatment and what is yet to come. He is continuing chemo and is due to have stem cell transplant in mid-June. The process is moving along as expected and will likely be harder before starting to get better. Session members continue to offer prayers on his behalf.

The Session and Pastor Sarah will share updates regularly and from the pulpit for the most amount of transparency possible.

OMNIBUS MOTION:

- Motion to approve the minutes of the Session Stated Meeting, April 26, 2023.
- Christian Education Committee seeks approval for summer family gatherings. Sundays on the Lawn will be held from 5 to 7 p.m. on June 25, July 23, and August 20.
- The Justice Team seeks approval for a book study of Matthew Desmond's *Poverty by America*, Tuesday evenings on July 25, August 8, and August 22.
- There were no motions pulled for discussion. Ruling Elder Greg Winner moved that the Omnibus motion be approved. The motion passed unanimously.

FINANCE:

- Elder Peter Watt-Morse highlighted a few points from the financial report.
 - Due to receipt of a larger pledge, pledge amounts are ahead of projected for budget.
 - Work needs to be done to organize the transition of Rev. Kolb and Rev. Robbins in the budget.
 - The process for donating appreciated stock with Covenant is not yet clear.

PITTSBURGH PRESBYTERY MEETING REPORT:

Pam Howe, Peter Gilmore, and Rev. Sarah Robbins attended the meeting on

May 18, 2023. The report, submitted by Pam Howe was referenced.

Following a brief discussion of the report, Ruling Elder Peter Kaplan followed up with a message of thanks to Session for supporting the efforts of the Justice Team as well as a request. At the Justice Team meeting on Monday evening, it was suggested that Session might send a note of congratulations to the Executive Committee of the Presbytery on the creation of the task force to address historical marginalization of the Presbytery's black congregations and express the Session's willingness to support the work of the task force. This suggestion was approved and Session agreed that it would be appropriate for Peter Gilmore and Pam Howe to draft the letter, then share with Session members for review and approval. Session asked that the Anti-Racism Transformation Team (ARTT), the Amos 5:24 Ministry Team, and the Pittsburgh Chapter of the Presbyterian Black Caucus receive copies of the letter. **The next meeting of the Presbytery's Executive Committee takes place on Tuesday, June 6th**, so ideally the letter can be completed, reviewed, and sent in time to reach the Executive Committee prior to that date, presumably by email.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Reports were briefly reviewed and referenced.

DEACONS/CARE LIST:

The Deacons report and Care List were referenced and updated. It seems that there is a need to review the Lazarus funding process.

OLD BUSINESS:

The Emergency Preparedness Plan Update: Mary Lang followed up on investigating interest of ushers in attending CPR/AED certification. There was limited interest. At this time, Sixth will not pursue organized and expensive training sessions. There are a number of options, should anyone like to become certified.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ruling Elder Barb Parees raised the issue that the Safety Protocol needs to be updated and shared with all who use the church building. The ushers and Sunday school teachers have done a walk-through to familiarize themselves with the emergency systems in place, but more needs to be done to create a culture of safety.

Elder Parees made a motion to create a task force to include a representative from each of the following groups: House committee, ushers, Christian Education committee, choir, personnel (Barb), and to include Jenny Newman, to review and update safety protocols and policies for the church. including how to publicize and share with groups and individuals who use the church building. The task force will bring some recommendations to the next Session meeting in June for review. The Motion passed unanimously.

COFFEE HOUR ASSIGNMENT:

June 4 will be the annual church picnic, which, for the first time in three years, will be pre-pandemic in nature

NEXT MEETING:

June 28, 2023, 7 p.m.

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 July/August newsletter is June 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...

"Watching My Friend Pretend Her Heart Isn't Breaking"
Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer

On Earth, just a teaspoon of neutron star would weigh six billion tons. Six billion tons.	a neutron star. How dense it is, how it carries inside it the memory of collapse.
The equivalent weight of how much railway it would take to get a third of the way to the sun.	How difficult it is to move then. How impossible to believe that anything could lift that weight.
It's the collective weight of every animal on earth. Times three.	There are many reasons to treat each other with great tenderness. One is the sheer miracle that we are here together on a planet surrounded by dying stars.
Six billion tons sounds impossible until I consider how it is to swallow grief — just a teaspoon and one might as well have consumed	One is that we cannot see what anyone else has swallowed.