

October 2023



SIXTH  
*presbyterian*  
CHURCH

# Sixth Sense

## From the Pastor: A New Season Is Upon Us!

As we transition to the season of Fall, we have a wonderful line-up of worship opportunities and speakers this month.

### On October 1st...

We will celebrate World Communion Sunday! This is one of my favorite worship services, as we remember our connection with other Christians around the globe.

You might remember: World Communion Sunday (originally called World Wide Communion Sunday) is a gift of the Presbyterian Church to the larger ecumenical church. The first celebration occurred at Shadyside Presbyterian Church here in 1933 where Dr. Hugh Thompson Kerr served as pastor. Dr. Kerr first conceived the notion of World Communion Sunday during his year as moderator of the General Assembly (1930).

World Communion Sunday grew out of the Division of Stewardship at Shadyside. It was their attempt to bring churches together in a service of Christian unity – in which everyone might receive both inspiration and information, and above all, to know how important the Church of Jesus Christ is, and how each congregation is interconnected one with another.

### On October 8th...

Pastor Sarah will lead worship, and the Rev. Dr. Asa Lee, President of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary will be preaching. We are delighted to host him and hear a good word about theological education and how we can be partners together. For more information about Rev. Dr. Lee, see page two.

### On October 15th...

Pastor Sarah and her family will be on vacation in Maine from October 9th through October 16th. Rev. Susan Rothenberg will be on call for any pastoral care emergencies.

In Pastor Sarah's place, Rev. Erin Angeli will be leading worship and preaching. Rev. Erin Angeli is the Associate Pastor for Queer and Neighborhood Ministry at the Commonwealth of Oakland. If you would like to view a fantastic new video they wrote and produced about the ministry that is happening in Oakland, please check out this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8TJqaiGKRR>

### On October 22nd...

We are grateful that the choir will be leading us in worship. This week our very own Dr. Douglas-Jayd Burn and the chancel choir will be offering reflective and meditative pieces of music that will be paired with scripture and prayer. We give thanks for all of their hard work and talent being shared with so many people.

*Continued on the next page*

### On October 29th...

The final Sunday in October will begin our Stewardship season with a sermon focused on our theme for this year, "The Good That Is Ours To Do." **After worship, the Session has called for a congregational meeting for the purpose of dissolving the call of Rev. Dr. Vincent Kolb and to vote on the PNC slate presented by the Nominating Committee. Rev. Brian Wallace will also be present with us. Please make every effort to attend this important meeting.**

Blessings,  
Rev. Sarah



## October 8 Guest Preacher: Reverend Doctor Asa J. Lee

There The Rev. Dr. Asa Lee was born in Suffolk, England, and is the product of a loving home where his mother and grandmother instilled in him the values of pride and integrity that are guiding him through his life and ministry.

Since coming to Christ as a teenager, Dr. Lee has used the gifts that God has given him to be in service to the community and the body of Christ. Rev. Lee exercises his gifts as a educator of leadership, worship and theology. He has taught in public and private schools in Virginia and Maryland, and served in a leadership capacity in several churches in the Hampton Roads Area of Virginia. It was while serving as the Minister of Music at the Saint John Baptist Church in Columbia, Maryland that he accepted the call to pastoral ministry.

Rev. Dr. Lee currently serves as the President of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He comes to the presidency after seven years of service as Wesley Theological Seminary as Vice President for Campus Administration and Associate Dean for Community Life. Dr. Lee is a dedicated theological educator and believes strongly in education as the vehicle for expanding one's view of the world. He has served on the faculty of Northern Virginia Community College and is often a guest lecturer at workshops and seminars dealing with Christianity in the 21st century; religious difference; and issues affecting church leadership.

Rev. Dr. Lee completed the Doctor of Ministry degree in Educational Leadership at the Virginia Theological Seminary after having earned his Master of Divinity degree cum Laude from Wesley Theological Seminary. He completed his Bachelor of Arts degree in Music, Magna cum Laude from Hampton University. Dr. Lee was licensed by the Faith Shepherd Baptist Church of Washington, DC, and ordained by the Mount Olive Baptist Church of Arlington, Virginia, where he served for ten years as the Assistant Pastor/Minister of Christian Education. He has held membership in several professional and social organizations, including the American Academy of Religion, the Religious Education Association, the Association of Leadership Educators, and is a Life Member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated.

Dr. Lee is married to the Reverend Chenda Lee, an Elder in Full Connection in the Virginia Annual Conference of United Methodist Church. Together they have four beautiful daughters, Akeemah (Pronounced: Ah-key-ma), Jaanaiya (Pronounced: Jah-nye-yah), Cydah (Pronounced: Say-duh) and Camaini (Pronounced: Kah-may-knee).



# Children and Youth Updates

## Christian Education Committee

There will be a meeting of the Christian Education Committee on Sunday, Oct. 8 following worship. We will be planning for Advent and Christmas. All interested in helping plan for the holiday season are invited to attend.

**OCTOBER 2023**

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

**Youth (6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>)**

Contact: Jenny Newman  
[jennynnew@gmail.com](mailto:jennynnew@gmail.com)  
412-720-6392  
Sith Presbyterian Church

**Weekly Youth Group at ELPC**  
4:30 to 7 p.m. Dinner is served at 5. East Liberty Pres. Church use the Highland Ave. entrance.

**4-25**

**Youth Service – CROP Walk**  
8 Youth volunteers from Sixth are requested to help with clean-up following the CROP Walk from 4 to 5 p.m. at South Avenue United Methodist church in Wilkinsburg. Jenny will provide transportation for participating youth to and from Sixth Church.

**15**

**Confirmation Meeting**  
12:30 – 2:30 at the church. Lunch will be provided.

**24 (Tuesd)**

**Youth Service – Hot Metal Bridge/The Table**  
5 to 6:30 at Hot Metal Bridge Church. Contact Jenny if you need transportation to and from 6<sup>th</sup>.

Students attending youth group at ECLP and serving at Hot Metal must complete our Universal Permission Form found at <http://www.sixthchurch.org/christian-education/>

## Blessed Be Educators

Members and friends of the Sixth Church community are invited to participate in the following events hosted by Blessed Be Educators, an ecumenical, faith-based organization of which Sixth Church is a member:

**Virtual Book Club Open to All:** A virtual book club begins Friday evening, October 20, from 7:00- 8:00 p.m. and continues monthly through February 2024. The chosen book is "When Women Pray: 10 Women of the Bible Who Changed the World Through Prayer" and the facilitator is Rev. Rhonda Higgins, an ordained pastor and certified counselor. The Book club is free, but participants purchase their own book. The virtual platform is Zoom. To register contact Mary Ann Hvizdos ([mahvizdos@verizon.net](mailto:mahvizdos@verizon.net) or 412-807-1611).

**Ecumenical Prayer Breakfast:** The 6th annual prayer breakfast will be held Saturday, October 28 from 9:15 - 11:30 am. at Church of the Redeemer Parish Hall, 5700 Forbes Avenue in Squirrel Hill. The guest speaker is Rev. Dr. Brenda J. Gregg, Founder and Senior Pastor, of Destiny of Faith Church. On October 28, 2022, Rev. Gregg was officiating a funeral for a gunshot victim when shots rang out immediately outside the church. She shepherded her congregation in the aftermath as they moved toward healing. Cost: \$10/ticket for hot breakfast, door prizes, and giveaways. Children welcome. To register contact Mary Ann Hvizdos ([mahvizdos@verizon.net](mailto:mahvizdos@verizon.net) or 412-807-1611).



## 20th Anniversary Organ Celebration

Thursday October 5, 2023 marks the 20th anniversary of the dedication of our organ at Sixth Presbyterian Church, the Casavant Frères (Opus 3833, 2003). You are cordially invited to join us in the sanctuary that evening at 7pm to celebrate this event with us. In addition to performances by our Chancel Choir and Director of Music Douglas-Jayd Burn, we are honored to have a special guest performance by Larry Allen who was the first to perform on Opus 3833. Former Director of Music Gail Luley will outline the history of our divine instrument and recall the specifics and stories surrounding the initial installation and dedication. Additionally, we are thrilled to host Dr. Will Thomas Cleveland who will be performing a recital including works by Wesley, Alain, Franck, Guilmant, Locklair, and Mendelssohn. Make sure you stick around after to talk to all the performers at the reception! We look forward to sharing this wonderful landmark with all who can attend.



## SUP pickup at Sixth Church is Sunday, October 29

Our next Single-Use Plastic (SUP) pickup at church.is on October 29. Cliff and Nora Johnson will be there to collect your SUP. Please contact Cliff and Nora at [crjndj@gmail.com](mailto:crjndj@gmail.com) if you have questions.

### Here are some guidelines. We ask that you::

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. Plastic bags are not recycled at Michael Brothers. (Recycle plastic bags at Giant Eagle stores.)
3. Deliver them during office hours the previous week if you can't bring them on that Sunday.
4. Write your name and what number plastic is in the container on each container you bring.
5. Leave your bags and boxes in the hallway near the parking lot door to make it easy for Cliff and Nora to collect.

### WHAT TO BRING:

- Numbered Single-Use Plastic (SUP), numbers 1 to 7, which means 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, #2, and #3-7 containers. #1 separately, #2 separately, # 3-7 all combined.
- Plastic bottle caps and lids are accepted only if they are numbered. Please put them into your container with the appropriate number.
- Metal caps and lids are accepted! Please put them in a separate labeled container.

**REMEMBER:** Don't bring items that can be recycled through the city's recycling program such as milk or detergent jugs.

**THANK YOU FOR TAKING PART IN OUR SINGLE-USE PLASTIC COLLECTION PROJECT!**

**And an update: Starting on October 14, no plastic bags will be provided at any stores in Pittsburgh.**

**Sunday, October 8  
2:00 pm**

**South Avenue United  
Methodist Church in  
Wilkinsburg**

**Walk through the neighborhoods of the East End to raise money for the hunger and development work of Church World Service! Last year Pittsburgh East walkers raised more than \$40,000.**

Once a year, a large group of East End church members join with neighbors from other organizations in support of Church World Service. You can be a walker, or you can sponsor a walker with your pledge. Choose the 5-mile option or the 1.5-mile option. Join us!

This year, the Walk will honor Vincent Kolb. The Pittsburgh East planning committee remembers the many times Vincent walked with us and provided enthusiastic leadership. He can't be with us this year, but we know he's there in spirit. Thanks, Vincent, for your many years of support. We're out here truckin' for you and for a great cause.

You can sign up online! You can donate online!

<https://events.crophungerwalk.org/2023/team/sixth-presbyterian-church-3>

Questions? Contact Pam Twiss (twisspct@gmail.com) or Sue Koehler (slpkoehler14@gmail.com)

**ENDING HUNGER ONE STEP AT A TIME**

**2023  
CROP HUNGER WALK**

**BUILDING *global* RESILIENCE**

**October Birthdays**

October 1 ..... Matt Cummings

Kyle Esbin

October 2 ..... Kevin McCann

October 3 ..... Claire Bertolet

Kirk Howe

Harry Kirk

October 7 ..... Erik Fogt

October 10.....Patty Halverson

Metta Loyd

October 16.....Lori King

October 18

.....Lennon Franz

October 20

.....Jenny Newman

October 25

.....Sarah Robbins

October 29

.....Stuart Gaul, Jr.

October 31

.....Peter Koehler



# Notes from the September Session Meeting

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

## CLERK'S REPORT

- Worship attendance: 8/27, 41 (in-person), 51 (YouTube); 9/3, 35 (in-person), 57 (YouTube); 9/10, 76 (in-person), 45 (YouTube); 9/17, 73 (in-person), 66 (YouTube); 9/24, 84 (in-person), 38 (YouTube)
- Commissioner for Pittsburgh Presbytery meeting, September 28, 2023, at Crestfield, 10 am—no volunteers

## SESSION CORRESPONDENCE:

- John Creasy of Garfield Community Farm sent a thank you card for the recent gifts to their program.

## OMNIBUS MOTION:

- A motion from the Deacons and a motion concerning employee benefits were pulled for further discussion to be included under the appropriate headings.
- Elder Peter Watt-Morse moved to approve the amended Agenda. The motion passed unanimously.
- Elder Peter Kaplan moved to approve the remainder of the Omnibus that had not been pulled for further discussion. The motion passed unanimously.
- Motion to approve the minutes of the Session Stated Meeting, August 23, 2023
- Motion to approve the minutes of the called Session Meeting, September 18, 2023, as amended.
- Motion to approve a Congregational Meeting for October 29, 2023 to dissolve Rev. Kolb's call and to approve the PNC.
- The Stewardship Committee requests that the Session approve the proposed goal for the 2024 Stewardship Campaign. The Stewardship Committee proposed the goal of \$366,700 for the 2024 Stewardship Campaign. This represents an increase of 1.50% over the \$361,275 in pledges we received during last years campaign.
- The Stewardship Committee requests that the November meeting of Session be held on Wednesday, November 15, 2023.
- Motion to approve 2024 staff benefits model (due to the Board of Pensions, October 6) Pulled/approved.
- Motion to approve Deacons' request for financial assistance for the amount of \$2,250 by the end of 2023. Pulled/ tabled

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

- **FINANCE:** Elder Watt-Morse reported.
  - Pledges still over budget
  - The 2024 budget will be determined after the Stewardship campaign is completed.
  - Elder Watt-Morse will ask for budget requests from Committee Chairs
  - While there has been a loss of pledging units, there have been new families attending/joining as well.
  - Agreement that there should be ongoing education for newer members about pledging.
  - Elder Watt-Morse noted that long-term disability for Rev. Kolb will be assumed by the Board of Pensions, not the church, which makes some funds available.
- **PERSONNEL:** Elder Barbara Parees reported.
  - Following discussion and clarification of the Employee Benefits plan, the motion to approve the staff benefits model was approved.
  - The Personnel Committee will be working to establish a Parental Leave Policy for staff.

- The Safety Task Force met on September 24 and will ultimately be sharing information that all church leaders should know. Jenny Newman and Elder Parees will be attending an all-day safety seminar, sponsored by the Presbytery, in November.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:** Minutes are included in the Session Packet.

- Church and Community – Elder Tom Twiss noted that they are still accepting proposals for the Rainy-Day fund, which offers emergency or disaster funding. Proposals are due by October 1,
- Earth Care – A productive meeting and will be sharing updated information as they are able.
- Gun Safety – Elder Lori King shared that their network of churches is expanding.
- Stewardship – Elder Kaplan reported that their campaign plans are going well. Speakers and writers are in place. Will consider ways of incorporating information about pledging. Rev Robbins noted that information and education assistance is available from Ellie Johns Kelly, through Pittsburgh Presbytery.
- Worship – Elders Scott Bell and Joan Markert met with Rev Robbins to finalize plans for World Communion Sunday, October 1. Communion Servers volunteered for October 1.

**DEACONS CARE LIST:** Rev Robbins referenced list with summer updates.

**DEACON MINUTES:** Referenced in packet.

- The Deacons' motion to approve their request for financial assistance was pulled for discussion. Following a discussion to clarify the request and consider possibilities as well as future consideration, the motion was tabled. It was noted several times that the Session supported the mission and that ways of funding should be explored further. Elder Kaplan made a formal statement that Session is supportive of the need for funding for the Hot Metal Meals and that a variety of funding options should be explored, so the motion made by the Deacons will be tabled until the October meeting. Session agreed unanimously.

**PASTORAL REPORT:**

- Rev. Robbins will have necessary information to the Elders for the Session Retreat on October 7, 2023 by Wednesday, October 4.
- Rev. Robbins will be leaving town for vacation on October 9-16. Elder Bell will greet the guest minister and Rev. Susan Rothenberg will handle congregational needs that may arise.
- Harry Kirk, Building Administrator, will be having some minor surgery, so will be off for a short while. Members of the House Committee will manage any issues.
- Rev. Robbins made a request to move the October Session meeting to a different day. The majority are able to attend on Tuesday, October 24 at 7 p.m. and agreed to make the change.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

- Night Market: Elder Marcus Robinson chaired a meeting of those involved in the committees who will be represented at the Night Market which takes place from 6-10 p.m. on October 7. Sixth will set up at 5:30 with tables and activities available until 8:30. Gun Safety, More Light, Christian Ed, C & C, and possibly Earth Care committees will be involved as well as other volunteers and staff. G S will have a poster with statistics, C E has craft activities, and Elder Kaplan has created a summary of all we do to share. They are seeking ideas for encouraging Night Market attendees to make their way to the church steps.

**NEXT MEETING:** Tuesday, October 24, 2023, 7 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathi Robinson-Dassel, Clerk of Session

Sixth Presbyterian Church  
1688 Murray Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15217  
412-421-2752  
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 November newsletter is October 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...

*"Let This Darkness Be a Bell Tower"*  
Rainer Maria Rilke (translated by Joanna Macy)

Quiet friend who has come so far,  
feel how your breathing makes more space around you.  
Let this darkness be a bell tower  
and you the bell. As you ring,

what batters you becomes your strength.  
Move back and forth into the change.  
What is it like, such intensity of pain?  
If the drink is bitter, turn yourself to wine.

In this uncontainable night,  
be the mystery at the crossroads of your senses,  
the meaning discovered there.

And if the world has ceased to hear you,  
say to the silent earth: I flow.  
To the rushing water, speak: I am.