

October 2020

# Sixth Sense

## From the Pastor

The letter of First Thessalonians is the first written expression of faith that we have in the New Testament. In this first word that Paul writes to the church, he reminds them that their lives are defined by hope and hope requires that we make decisions and investments today that are informed by a tomorrow that we cannot yet see. He exhorts them to be “steadfast in hope,” which implies that hope takes work; it is a conscious decision we must make every day during the pandemic, to choose hope and live for hope when much in life tempts us to despair.

Our stewardship theme this fall is “Shaped By Hope.” In a world beset by multiple crises, by suffering and deep misunderstanding, we at Sixth are committed to being shaped by hope as we live toward God’s promised day—a day when justice rolls down like waters; a day when swords are beaten into plowshares. We live toward this promised day because it makes more sense for us to turn toward one another than turn on each other; to feed one another than to shoot one another; it makes more sense to live toward a day when our children can grow up to be neither the destroyers nor the destroyed; a day when we are not obsessed with a person’s race or nationality, nor terrified by those who are not on my team, but a day when all of God’s children are treated as God’s children.

It is hard to find value in church life at a time when so much of what we value about church is missing: our chance to be together in person, to sing, pray, and commiserate with one another. But our generous investment in our community is conveying a message of hope near and far. So as you read and hear the testimonials this October, I hope you will prayerfully consider a generous gift to our ministry and mission, so that hope may remain steadfast and abound.

Peace!

Vincent

We will continue to keep our building closed due to the ongoing public health concerns. All events and activities, including services of worship, remain temporarily suspended. Session will monitor this situation and in-person worship will resume when deemed feasible.

**For continuing updates and to access our online worship experience, visit [sixthchurch.org](http://sixthchurch.org)**



SIXTH  
*presbyterian*  
CHURCH

## October Worship and Preaching

October 4 – World Communion Sunday, Matthew 21:33-46, “Desperate, Shameless, Unreserved Love”

October 11 – Ruling Elder Kate Davoli preaching, Romans 12; Mark 12, “Double or Nothing”

October 18 – I Thessalonians 1:1-10, “Shaped By Hope”

October 25 – Matthew 22:34-40, “The Greatest Commandment”

## What the Pastor Is Reading

*The Overstory*, Richard Powers

*The Education of an Idealist: A Memoir*, Samantha Power

*In Praise of the Useless Life: A Monk’s Memoir*, Paul Quenon

*Midnight in Chernobyl: The Untold Story of the World’s Greatest Nuclear Disaster*, Adam Higginbotham

# October Birthdays

October 1 ..... Matt Cummings

Kyle Esbin

October 2 ..... Kevin McCann

October 3 ..... Claire Bertolet

Kirk Howe

October 7 ..... Erik Fogt

October 10.....Patty Halverson

Metta Loyd

October 16.....Lori King

October 18.....Helen Franz

October 20.....Jenny Newman

October 23.....Stuart Gaul

October 29.....Stuart Gaul, Jr.

October 31.....Peter Koehler



## CROP Walk 2020

Due to COVID-19, we can't meet this year to walk together and help raise much-needed funds for Church World Service (CWS). Instead, we are asking each of you to consider going on individual or small group walks between now and mid-October.

You can commit to any length or location. To celebrate our commitment to this year's virtual walks, we are asking you to send photos from your walk. Be creative! Perhaps you have a beloved pet, some active children, a favorite pair of walking shoes. Feel free to share a few lines about what our annual CROP Walk means to you. (Please send your pictures/reflections to [office@sixthchurch.org](mailto:office@sixthchurch.org).)

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Sign up online for the Sixth Church team or make a donation to the team:

<https://www.crophungerwalk.org/pittsburghpa/Team/View/131841/Sixth-Presbyterian-Church>.

If you would like a paper envelope to keep donations, please contact the church office, and Amy will mail it to you. Envelopes with contributions can be returned to the church.

CROP Walk this year is especially urgent. Communities around the world are suffering terribly due to COVID-19, so your support of CWS is needed now more than ever. The annual Pittsburgh East CROP Hunger Walk benefits hunger programs at home and abroad, with 75% of the proceeds going to the hunger and development programs of CWS and 25% remaining in Pittsburgh for programs to feed those in need.

Learn more about the important work of CWS: <https://cwsglobal.org/about/>

More news about the Pittsburgh East virtual walk: <https://www.crophungerwalk.org/pittsburghpa/>





## The Open Door: A Place for Meditation and Reflection

Headed by Verna Robinson, we have created The Open Door in response to the turmoil in our lives.

The first meditation is lead by Rev. Betty Voigt, Gestalt therapist, and good friend of Sixth.

Check our website for Betty's video and future video and audio offerings.

## What We're Reading / Watching / Listening To / Doing

Peter Gilmore: Inspired and energized by last Sunday's Adult Sunday School with Pastor Vincent, I immediately began reading *Begin Again: James Baldwin's America and Its Urgent Lessons for Our Own*, by Eddie Glaude Jr. Nearly done. It's outstanding.

Kate Kennedy: Reading my new favorite author, Suzanne Brockmann

Lori King: Finishing up *The Field of Blood*, which I highly recommend. About to start *Fault Lines: a History of the U.S. Since 1974* by Kevin Kruse and Julian Zelizer. The book goes up to 2017, so it should be interesting reading in this election year.

Gail Luley: Still reading *Kim* by Rudyard Kipling, "A Journal of the Plague Year" by Daniel Defoe and picked up *Elizabeth I* by Anne Somerset after putting it down about five years ago.

Jenny Newman: I watched *The Social Dilemma* of Netflix. If any parents are interested in watching it with their middle/high school students, I have a discussion guide I can send you!

Maggie Ritchey: Working/playing in my yard, taking walks and falling further and further behind in both treasurer jobs!

Susan Maxwell Rothenberg: Besides cycling through the entire series of *The West Wing* for about the 15th time since January 2017, I recently finished watching all of *Grace and Frankie* and am in the middle of *The Kominsky Method*, which I knew nothing about, but am finding to be highly enjoyable. Listened to Stuart Stevens's *It Was All a Lie* on Audible while driving to and from Purdue a couple weeks ago and am close to finishing Bob Woodward's book, *Rage*.

Amy Whipple: Malakai and I are reading *Mail-Order Wings*, a book I loved as a kid. I just finished Allie Brosh's new book, *Solutions and Other Problems*, and eagerly await next week's release of Tana French's latest. In the meantime, I'm rewatching *BoJack Horseman* for the 85th time.



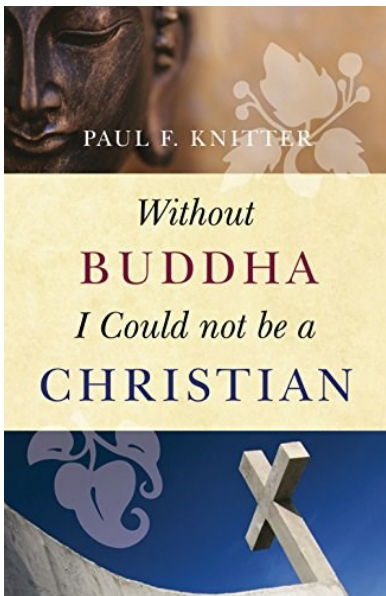
## Adult Education Opportunities, Fall 2020

Adult Education will take place Sunday mornings at 9:45. All Zoom links will be included in the weekly all-church email the Friday before the meeting.

**Begin Again: James Baldwin's America and Its Urgent Lessons For Our Own** by Dr. Eddie S. Glaude, Jr.: "In this powerful and elegant book on James Baldwin, Eddie Glaude weaves together biography, meditation, a literary analysis, and a moral essay on American. Both Baldwin and this book speak directly to today." Pastor Vince will lead a two-week study of this profound work as we contemplate the choices before us in the fall of 2020. **(September 27 and October 4)**

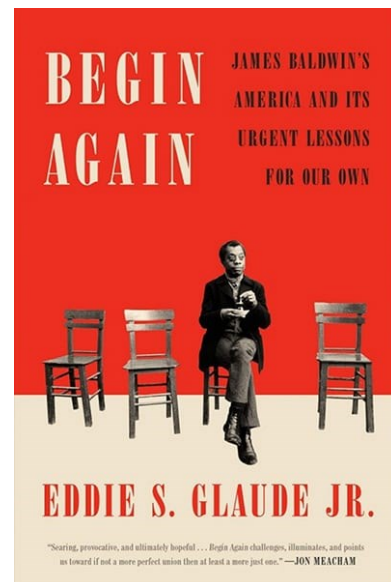


**Rev. Karen Rohrer, *Sustaining Grace: Innovative Ecosystems for New Faith Communities***: In this book, written in collaboration with Dr. Scott Hagley and Rev. Michael Gehrling, a number of innovative voices in the 1001 Worshipping Communities movement ask the question, "How can we imagine new ways to sustain our faithful work in churches, especially in a season of so much institutional vulnerability?" Rohrer will lead conversation about this groundbreaking book. **(October 11)**



**Dr. Alex Finley, *An Intimate Economy: Enslaved Women, Work, and America's Domestic Slave Trade***: In her award winning book, Dr. Finley explores the relationship between capitalism to slavery and women's labor. "I consider the actions of women within the antebellum slave market. My research not only illustrates that women's domestic labor was neither obvious nor natural, it also connects women to the study of more traditional economic questions." Finley will discuss her thought-provoking study and there is sure to be lively conversation! **(October 18)**

***Spiritual Resources for Coping: Without Buddha, I Could Not Be a Christian* by Paul Kittner**: Pastor Vincent will lead this discussion of Paul Kittner's landmark work. In a time of multiple crises, we need as many spiritual resources at our side as possible. With Kittner's book as a guide, we will talk about how our experience of other spiritualities has informed our own and helped us to thrive. **(Starts October 25, additional dates TBD)**



### Quarterly Donation Statements

Early this month, you will receive your quarterly donation statement. Please check it for accuracy. If there are any discrepancies – or if you would like to switch to online donations – please contact Amy.

We're grateful for all you do to support us, especially during the pandemic. We couldn't be Sixth without your contributions!

# Youth Group

The youth group will continue meeting on Thursdays via Zoom. Links to access the Zoom sessions and meeting dates will be sent via email. Contact Jenny Newman at (412) 720-6392 or by email at [Jennyrunew@gmail.com](mailto:Jennyrunew@gmail.com) for more information.

# Sunday School

Sunday school will continue to meet at 10 am via Zoom (check your weekly email for the link). We know this is not ideal as everyone is spending a lot of time online already, but it's our best option to keep us connected until we meet again in person.

We will provide all activities, worksheets, etc. in a downloadable format. If you would prefer to receive things by mail, we can do that, too! Email me at [Jennyrunew@gmail.com](mailto:Jennyrunew@gmail.com) and let me know. If Zoom Sunday school isn't a good fit for your family, and you want to try the lessons on your own, I can send you the lesson plans with some tips on how to use them.

Peace and Blessings,

Jenny Newman

## Fall Family Drop-in

Stop by the church front steps  
**Sat. Oct. 3 from 12 to 2 p.m.**

We will be handing out fall-themed treats and take-home activities. Come and visit us on the front lawn while social distancing, of course.

**Masks are required!**

Sixth Presbyterian Church

# Notes from the September Session Meeting

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

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Minutes from the August 27, 2020 Session meeting were presented to the Session for approval with the following edits:
  - Correction of misspelled words
  - Clarification of Reopening Taskforce metrics
  - Correction of the date of the July Financial report
- **Motion to approve** minutes as amended
- **Motion passed** unanimously

## CLERK'S REPORT

- Worship (Link Hits): 8/30, 96 (53 YouTube views); 9/6, 95 (23 YouTube views); 9/13, 90 (44 YouTube views); 9/20, 70 (46 YouTube views)
- Rev. Kolb officiated the wedding of Carlos Omar Rivera-Morales and Jessica Michelle Craft on 9/12/20 in Frick Park.

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

FINANCE: The August financial report and a draft of Sixth Presbyterian's 2021 budget were presented for discussion by Finance Chair Mary Radcliffe.

## HOUSE:

- Capital Campaign Projects
  - The Fire Notification system plans are being reviewed for approval by the city of Pittsburgh.
  - The House committee has approved for the sanctuary's stained glass windows to be painted by the same company that is restoring the windows.
- Building Maintenance
  - Verizon will be paying for carpet repairs caused by a leak in the Verizon tower.
- Building manager Harry Kirk will be on a medical leave. The house committee and personnel committee have coordinated for cleaning and building maintenance coverage during his absence.

PERSONNEL: Employee health care options provided in the personnel report were reviewed by Session.

## TOWER UPDATE:

- Negotiations for the lease contract for the cell phone tower have been ongoing with the help of a broker.
- Recommendations will be provided to the executive committee and Session before being approved by the Presbytery.

## PASTOR'S REPORT AND DEACON'S REPORT

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



## REOPENING TASK FORCE

- At the current time, the metrics for reopening and resuming in-person worship have not been met for Allegheny County.
- The Reopening Task Force will work to find ushers for when in-person worship resumes.

## OLD BUSINESS

- Draft of By-Law Revisions
  - A draft of the by-laws revisions were presented to the Session.
  - In order to align the by-laws to the church charter, the charter must also be revised and filed with the state of Pennsylvania.
  - **Motion to approve** the following:
    - Elder Bill Moore to revise and present an amended charter to Session at the October 2020 Session meeting
    - The cost of the filing fee
    - **Motions passed** unanimously.
- Statement Against White Supremacy
  - A correct draft of the Statement Against White Supremacy will be reviewed at the October 2020 Session meeting.

## NEW BUSINESS

### More Light Committee:

- The More Light committee has recommended that the Capital Campaign funds originally allocated to Judah Fellowship be provided to Sisters PGH due to Judah Fellowship's dissolution.
- **Motion to approve** the reallocation of Capital Campaign Funds to Sisters PGH.
- **Motion passed** unanimously.

### Church and Community:

- Church and Community requested an acceleration of the dispersal of their budget apportionment to meet the community's needs.
- **Motion to approve** the dispersal of the Church and Community funds early.
- **Motion passed** unanimously.

### Christian Education:

- Christian Education committee will hold an event on October 3, 2020 on the Church steps. All COVID safety precautions will be required to be followed by children and adults.
- **Motion to approve** Christian education event on October 3, 2020
- **Motion passed** unanimously

**NEXT MEETING:** October 28 2020

Sixth Presbyterian Church  
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412-421-2752  
office@sixthchurch.org  
www.sixthchurch.org

**Dated Material – Do Not Hold**  
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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 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...

"It was a time  
of waiting, of suspended action.

I lived in the present, which was  
that part of the future you could see.  
The past floated above my head,  
like the sun and moon, visible but never reachable.

It was a time  
governed by contradictions, as in I felt nothing and  
I was afraid." – Louise Glück

"O hushed October morning mild,  
Begin the hours of this day slow.  
Make the day seem to us less brief." – Robert Frost