

Sixth Sense

November 2025



Dear Sixth Church Family,

I can hardly believe I've been here half a year already! Time has flown by as we've shared in worship, fellowship, and important conversations together. As we move into November, we have many opportunities for learning and connection.

This month brings us our stewardship dedication on November 9th, when we'll celebrate all the ways we support each other and our wider community. It's a time to consider how we can best use our resources to further God's work in the world.

I'm also looking forward to our upcoming opportunity to hear from Jonathan Kuttub, an international human rights lawyer and co-founder of Nonviolence International. His expertise in international law and commitment to peaceful solutions makes this a valuable opportunity for our congregation to engage with complex global issues through a lens of faith and understanding. (*Flyer on page 8.*)



Graphic design by Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman
A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

We're fully engaged in preparations for the Advent season. This year, we will be reflecting on "A Sanctified Art" and the theme, "What Do You Fear?" This promises to offer meaningful opportunities for reflection as we approach the holidays. You'll be hearing more about our Advent and Christmas plans in the coming weeks.

I continue to be available for conversation, prayer, or just sharing a cup of coffee. The next coffee shop office hours will be held on Wednesday, November 26th (yes, that's the day before Thanksgiving.) Please don't hesitate to reach out if you'd like to connect any time.

With gratitude for each of you,
Pastor Charissa

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Rev. Dr. Charissa Clark Howe".

WORSHIP

Nov. 9th-- Dedication Sunday. Fellowship to follow service.

Nov. 16th-- (*Hunger & Homelessness Sunday*)

Nov. 23rd-- Christ the King/ Reign of Christ

Nov. 30th-- 1st Sunday of Advent. Potluck and holiday movie! (4pm-8pm)

JOIN US ADVENT POTLUCK

Begin Advent with us!
We will provide beverages
and tableware - just bring a
dish to share. We will have
Advent resources to share
and will decorate our
Chapel Christmas tree.

Nov.30
4 p.m.

AND A HOLIDAY MOVIE

Movie
begins
at 6 p.m.

CHRISTMAS PAGAENT

SUNDAY, DEC. 14TH DURING WORSHIP
Rehearsals for Children and Youth who
would like to participate will be held:

Sunday, Nov. 23 at Noon
Sunday, Dec. 7 at Noon
Saturday, Dec. 13 at 10 a.m.

MAKE THE Yuletide GAY



Crys
Matthews

Heather
Mae

Flamy
Grant

Monday Dec. 8 @ 7 p.m.

Visit the Chuch Website
for Ticket Information

A flyer for November youth group activities. The word "November" is written in a large, white, cursive font at the top, surrounded by autumn leaves. Below it, on the left, is a large orange starburst shape containing text about a Youth Service Project. To the right of the starburst, there is text about a Thursday Youth Group and specific dates for service projects. At the bottom right, contact information for Jenny Newman is provided.

November

Youth Service Project
1-4pm
Sunday, Nov.23
Lunch Provided!
(following Christmas Pageant Rehearsal)

Thursday Youth Group
4:30 to 7pm
Dinner is served at 5pm.

Nov. 6- @ELPC
Nov. 13- @ELPC
Nov. 20- @ Sixth Church

Please contact Jenny for more info
about service projects and the
Winter Youth Retreat
at Camp Crestfield.

Jenny Newman
412-720-6392

Young Adult Gathering

Help us plan our upcoming gathering for young adults!

Our first gathering will be just to connect with one another and talk about what you all want out of community connections.

Please fill out the form linked below or email rev.charissa.howe@gmail.com to let us know you're interested.

[Click here for our Young Adult Gathering Link](#)

2025 CROP Hunger Walk Update

It was a great event!

What? The East End CROP Hunger Walk on October 12.

Who? Our team of walkers from Sixth Church: April Clisura, Patty Halverson, Charissa Howe, Cliff Johnson, Nora Johnson, Peter Kaplan, Peter Koehler, Sue Koehler, Leila Richards, Pamela Twiss, Tom Twiss, Amanda Zeglin, Rowan Zeglin, Tristan Zeglin, Violet Zeglin.

What happened? More than \$12,000 was donated to support the team's efforts. Thank you, wonderful people at Sixth Church!

Where does the money go? Most of it goes to development projects all over the world, aimed at eliminating hunger. A smaller component stays in Pittsburgh to support the great food bank at Wilkesburg Community Ministry.

STAY TUNED! WE'LL GIVE YOU A COMPLETE WRAP-UP FOR THE ENTIRE WALK IN ABOUT A MONTH.

Earth Care News

We hope everyone enjoyed our church's pollinator garden this year and tried some of the plants in your own garden. But how do we prep the gardens for winter. Did you know that the many perennials offer food, habitat and visual interest for the winter garden.



It won't be a tidy garden where everything is cut back in the fall. The plump seeds hidden in the faded flower heads will feed non-migratory birds that stay for the winter. The berries left on bushes and trees also feed the birds. Pushing fallen leaves on gardens to insulate plants and nourish the soil will shelter hibernating insects that in turn will sustain ground feeding birds. It will be a bit like nature's own bug hotel!

Happy gardening!

The next Michael's Brothers pickup will be January 11. We still need someone who would be willing to transport the plastics on that date.



November Birthdays



Nov. 3	Alice Scales	Nov. 16	Brian Lazarus	Nov. 22	Cosy Cornelius-Bates
Nov. 5	Mary Crossley	Nov. 17	Peter Gilmore	Nov. 25	Laura Sindhi
Nov. 6	Megan Fogt	Nov. 21	Bob Robinson-Dassel	Nov. 27	Robin Holtje Elena Berg

Voices of Sixth Church

Although this year's Stewardship Campaign has just begun, for me it has already been quite satisfying. This is because I have had the great pleasure of reading the testimonials that several members of Sixth Church have written for this year's campaign.

From each of their unique perspectives, the writers have expressed how the values of Sixth Church resonate with them, why they pledge their financial support to Sixth, and their love of our church and its members.

In addition to the testimonials of Alice Scales, Sara Spinella, and Sue Koehler which appeared in the stewardship brochure, we are proud to share here four testimonials written by Julie Caryl, Rae Hodge, Kate Kennedy, and Martha Funderburgh. I am sure you will be fascinated and inspired by each of their stories.

-Peter Kaplan
Stewardship Chair

Julie Caryl

When Rae and I were looking for a church to attend, we talked about what we wanted that church to provide. When I first read the Stewardship Campaign's theme, "Caring for One Another in a Changing World," I realized that it commits us to nurturing an inclusive faith community that embodies Christ's peace through active compassion. It was clear that this theme reflects how I want to travel on my faith journey.

I also had other criteria for a church, and Sixth met all of them. We both knew that we needed to be a part of a More Light church. I wanted a pastor whose sermons would have relevance in my daily life. All of the pastors I have known at Sixth (Vincent Kolb, Sarah Robbins, and Charissa Howe), have certainly done that I also hoped to have the opportunity to meld my faith with my social concerns. This has been provided through the Gun Safety and Earth Care committees and the Peace and Justice group.

I feel blessed to be able to contribute to the Stewardship Campaign of a church that so thoughtfully cares for the congregation, community, and world.



Image: Julie Caryl (right) and Rae Hodge

Rev. Rae Hodge

Sixth Presbyterian Church initially moved into my radar many years ago while Reverend John McCall was at the helm. As I reflect back on those days, it was PFLAG meetings that were so helpful to me as a young woman from the gay community. It was a time of hiding back then, when coming out was not the best option.

The welcomes I received from Sixth Church members and John McCall were like wonderful warm hugs. Our church continues to be a bright and shining star to the LGBTQIA Community as the first “More Light” Church in Pittsburgh Presbytery. Sixth remains an inclusive faith community, caring for all of God’s children and their spiritual well-being. The congregation continues living, embodying and demonstrating Christ’s peace and love in all of its work within the congregation, the local community, and the world.

Each Sunday, I am uplifted by the worship service, encouraged by God’s word preached by Pastor Charissa, and enhanced by our choir under Shay’s leadership. I feel so blessed to be a part of this congregation. I am inspired by the service and strengthened through God’s love and grace-filled presence. As I leave the Church, I feel ready to face the trials of the coming week.

For all of these reasons, I choose to make my pledge to Sixth Church.

Kate Kennedy

I grew up in in Spain and attended school mostly in France. Catholicism surrounded me in Spain, but I did not fully understand it. I eventually became a Catholic at age 28 in Barcelona. I came to the US in 1988 and attended Bryn Mawr and Drexel.

One night I had a wonderful spiritual experience with Jesus Christ, which moved me to join an African American Baptist church. I chose to convert to Protestantism not so much because I rejected Catholicism but as part of my spiritual growth. After experiencing the Holy Spirit as a white light that showed me everything that I had done in my life and gave me the chance to repent, I needed more Bible-focused instruction.

By the time I moved to Pittsburgh, I had chosen Presbyterianism because of its intellectual approach. I joined Sixth on Easter morning in 2016. Both at Sixth and my previous Presbyterian church in New Jersey, I struggled with doubts that God answered one by one.

At Sixth I became a deacon, which showed me



how many actions Sixth takes to help others. I enjoy Wednesday Bible Study, where I learn from different points of view, and serving as a liturgist. Sixth has become a place where I feel comfortable and liked. My bonds continue to widen and deepen.

My main enjoyment each week is to sit in the sanctuary and reflect. The habit of attending each Sunday has helped me to live in better communion with God. I have been pledging to Sixth Church since I joined. I am pleased to contribute financially to church life. I prayerfully decide how much I will give each Sunday and then work to meet my pledge by the end of the year. I encourage you to join me.

Martha Funderburgh



When our family moved to Pittsburgh, searching for a new church wasn't high on our agenda. We had too much to do - a new high school for our youngest, sending another off to her first year of college, and our just married son moving to Brooklyn. My husband Jim and I were starting a new research lab at Pitt med school, totally from scratch. Not a lot of time was left to discover our new neighborhood, much less search for a church.

Then, two planes ran into the World Trade Center, where our new daughter-in-law was working on the first floor. With scarce communication, it took all day before we heard that she was safe. Everything was changing. Sunday morning, we set out on Forbes to find a newspaper (they were sold out) but we noticed that this church on the corner was just opening its doors. We heard the beautiful organ, and we entered. John McCall's sermon was strong, the music was good, and as a bonus, there was a familiar voice just behind us - yep, Fred Rogers. The caring people in the pews were like a consoling family.

Fast forward 25 years. Sixth Church is like my second home in so many ways. Both these homes depend on me now for keeping them in shape and functioning as Jesus would want, whether it's donations to repair the roof, service to others in need, or acting as an advocate for peace.

I will be increasing my monthly pledge again this year.

Would you like to know what you pledged this year so that you can determine your pledge for next year? We can help! Reach out to the church office.

A message from the Gun Safety Committee:

**GUN INJURIES ARE
THE NUMBER
ONE KILLER OF KIDS
IN THE U.S.
WE CAN ALL HELP
CHANGE THAT.**

Image from:
Agree to Agree. (2025).
Spread the word:
Gun injuries are preventable.
<https://agreetoagree.org/>

The next Gun Safety
Committee meeting is after
service **on Sunday, Nov. 16th**
– join them in the parlor.



Gaza: What Next?
With Jonathan Kuttab

Images from the Gaza War 2023-2025. 29 January 2025. Jaber Jihad Badwan . Wikimedia Commons.
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gaza_war_2023_-_2025_IMG_3929.jpg



**1688 Murray Ave.
Pittsburgh
Sat. Nov, 22 7PM**



Jonathan Kuttab is a leading human rights attorney in Israel and Palestine. He is also a co-founder of the Palestinian human rights group Al-Haq and of Non-violence International, and Executive Director of Friends of Sabeel North America (FOSNA).

Advance registration is strongly encouraged: <https://evite.me/6KjxPY1RPT>
or scan QR to register

The program will include the opportunity to financially support humanitarian assistance and to advocate for peace and justice in Gaza.

Session Meeting Highlights

Sixth Presbyterian Church– Saturday, October 25, 2025

CALL TO ORDER/OPENING PRAYER: Rev. Howe began the meeting at 10:05am with a devotional for her and elders to read aloud.

CLERK’S REPORT:

- Worship: In Person/YouTube- 9/28 (51/34); 10/5 (77/57); 10/12 (81/45); 10/19 (101/12)
- Pittsburgh Presbytery 2025 Meeting Schedule
 - ◊ Thursday, December 11 – Cross Roads Presbyterian Church, Monroeville, at 1PM. Elder Tom Twiss approved to attend.

PASTOR’S REPORT:

- Pastor Charissa would like to update and collect items for the care closet in light of possible increase of needs.
- Many areas of the church need to be cleaned and organized and work times will be scheduled.
- Preparations are being made for the Christmas Season, including the *Make the Yuletide Gay* concert.
- Pastor Charissa has met with several chairs of committees and working groups and will be working with Kelly to establish a centralized calendar.

COMMITTEE & WORKING GROUPS:

- Reports reviewed and approved as needed.

DEACONS REPORT AND CARE LIST:

- Included in information.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS:

- Officer retreat will be rescheduled, probably for January.
- Coffee Hour Assignments will be reviewed for the coming year.
- Elder Davoli would like to introduce DISCORD for possible use.

COFFEE HOUR ASSIGNMENTS:

- November 9th- Stewardship, Dedication Sunday
- December 14th- Christmas lunch, Pageant

NEXT SESSION MEETINGS:

- Tuesday, November 11, 2025, 7pm
- Wednesday, December 17, 2025, 7pm

WRAP UP/CLOSING PRAYER: The meeting was adjourned with prayer at 11:40am.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathi Robinson-Dassel, Clerk of Session



The Sixth Sense newsletter comes out on the first Wednesday of the month.

The deadline for December newsletter submissions is:
Friday, November 21st.

Please email articles and announcements to the church office at
officesixthchurch@gmail.com.

You can also put printed copies on the office desk.

Thanks you!

EMAIL SAFETY ALERT: BEWARE OF SPAM EMAILS

Spam and spoof emails continue to be an issue- not only here at Sixth but also in other congregations and throughout the Presbytery. Please be assured that our staff will never ask you to share confidential information over email.

Pastor Charissa emphasizes that she will never request sensitive or private information via email. If a matter is confidential, she will ask you to call and speak to her directly. Beware of emails asking that you run a "discreet errand" or asking for our directory.

Thank you for helping us keep folks safe.



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.

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