

Sixth Sense



June 2026

Dear Sixth Family,

As our schedules shift this summer, we are keeping our church family connected through a fun new initiative called "Rubber Duck Spirituality"! Each participant will receive a random rubber ducky with a specific spiritual practice attached to it to focus on over the summer months. If you missed getting one at worship in the park, you can get one in the sanctuary in the coming weeks or simply pick your own practice – such as reading through a book of the Bible, practicing centering prayer on a regular basis, or going on prayer walks – and grab a duck (or print a picture of one) to join in!



This little duck serves as a fun, physical reminder to partner with the Spirit and keep co-creating beautiful things with God wherever you go. We invite you to take your duck on all your summer adventures, much like a cuter, waterproof "Flat Stanley," and snap photos of its travels to remind you that God is always with you and your church family loves you. Be sure to tune in for our weekly community duck challenges – like exploring a new park – and let's see where the Spirit takes us this summer!

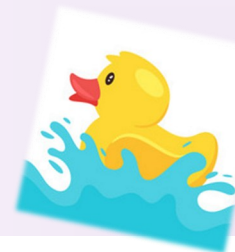
Speaking of exploring new parks and enjoying the summer weather, we will have some new opportunities for casual hangouts - including some walks in local parks. Please note that our regular Coffee Shop Office Hours at Commonplace Coffee will be taking a break for the months of June and July. Instead, I am thrilled to invite you to drop in occasionally or every time to our new monthly hangouts:

- **A Walk in the Park:** Starting July 11th, we will gather on the 2nd Saturday of the month at 10:00AM to explore a different park or trail. Strollers and dogs are completely welcome to join the fun! First meet up point is TBD -- if you have a favorite easy trail, feel free to let me know your suggestions.
- **Matcha Monday:** Starting July 20th, drop by Kyo Matcha (5864 Forbes Ave) on the 3rd Monday of the month between 4:00PM and 6:00PM. Pop in for a moment or stay a while to hang out and enjoy some matcha tea or ice cream.
- **Pub Theology:** Starting August 4th, we will gather on the 1st Tuesday of the month from 7:30PM to 9:30PM. Each month we will have a theological theme to discuss, along with a book recommendation. If you don't read the book, that is perfectly okay – the book is just for bonus points! Our first location and topic are TBA.

Whether you are traveling far with your rubber duck or dropping by for a walk or some matcha right here in the neighborhood, I am so excited to stay connected with you this summer.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Charissa

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





For more information:
contact Jenny through the
church office

Join us this Summer (7th-12th grade)

Lawn Hang Outs: Join us on the church lawn for conversation, games, and snacks (of course)
5-8 p.m. June 27 and Aug. 26 (during Market Night)

VCS Teen Volunteer Training: 6-8 p.m. June 18

Bubble Tea Time: @ Kyo Matcha (5864 Forbes Ave)
6-8 p.m. June 16, July 7, Aug. 18



YES Weekend! (Youth Engaged in Service)

10 a.m. Friday, July 1-10:30 a.m. Aug. 2

Sixth and ELPC youth are invited to spend the weekend together, participating in service projects and fellowship. We will be sleeping at ELPC (Friday night) and Sixth Church (Saturday night), so sleeping bags are required 😊
More info and registration will be available soon, so mark your calendars!

Congratulations Graduates!

Levi Howe has graduated from Pittsburgh Science and Technology Academy and will be attending the University of Pittsburgh.

Zoe Casci has graduated from Allderdice High School and will be attending Susquehanna University.



Christian Education Committee

As part of our new organizational structure, the Christian Education Committee is now a working subcommittee of the Spiritual Formation Committee. We warmly invite anyone interested in Christian education and spiritual growth in our congregations to join Jenny Newman, Director of Christian Education, for two gatherings this summer.

These meetings will be a time to listen, share ideas, and plan for the upcoming church year. For those who prefer to join remotely, Zoom links will be available upon request from the church office.

LET'S TALK
ABOUT
**CHILDREN
AND YOUTH**

6 p.m. Tuesday, June 30

LET'S TALK
ABOUT
**ADULT
EDUCATION**

6 p.m. Tuesday, July 28

Created for Community

Awareness, Access, and Belonging in the Church

Join us for a time of learning and conversations about how the church can reflect God's hospitality by recognizing and understanding human diversity as part of God's creation. Workshop sessions will focus on how we can build worshipping communities that provide space, opportunity, and a participatory environment for all.

Individuals and congregation groups welcome!

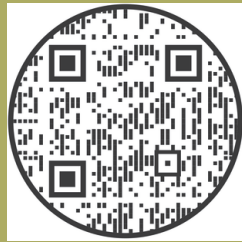
Each workshop will include invited speakers from our churches and communities who will share their lived experiences. There will be time in each session for brainstorming and reflection on current practices with a goal of creating tools to evaluate our worship, programs, and spaces with an eye toward inclusion and best practices. Congregational groups participating will have the opportunity to receive a small gift of seed funds for accessibility projects.

Hosted by:
SIXTH
presbyterian
CHURCH

1688 Murray Avenue
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Lunch will be provided
during each workshop

To register for the sessions
please use the QR code or
visit the church website at
www.sixthchurch.org



June 28

11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Accessibility Foundations

July 26

11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Considering Cognitive Changes

August 30

11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Neurodiversity

September 27

12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.

Engaging Hearing and Vision Differences

This workshop series will be accompanied by a discussion on the book "My Body is Not A Prayer Request: Disability Justice in the Church" by Amy Kenny.

Sixth Church's Food Justice Adventure

Permaculture is a philosophy for a sustainable, holistic lifestyle. Ecological researcher and writer Bill Mollison and David Holmgren coined the term in 1978. They combined the words permanent and agriculture to create permaculture as a system of ecological farming.



From April 13 until June 2, a group of Sixth Churchers met weekly in person and by Zoom with the Reverends John Creasy and Evan Clendenin.

John is a Presbyterian minister who lives in Pittsburgh. He is the founding director of [Garfield Community Farm](#), the largest permaculture site in Pittsburgh, where he has worked for seventeen years. John is also a founding pastor of [The Open Door Church](#) in Pittsburgh.

Evan is an Episcopal priest, currently serving as interim with Holy Spirit, Vashon WA. He has also worked as a horse farmer, a market gardener and a teacher.

Wild Indigo Guild is John's new endeavor, in co-leadership with Evan, to help congregations and people of faith connect with God through nature and develop the tools to bring effective food justice, environmental justice and ecological restoration into faith practice.



During the weekly Foundation meetings that took place from April 13 until June 2, we learned about Wild Indigo's Permaculture practices working through the 13 foundational principles, starting with "listen, learn, and respond" all the way through to "produce no waste".

Especially interesting was principle # 11, "create edges, value the marginal". In the natural world, there are edges of woods, of rivers, of grasslands. A cultivated field is edged by forest, and the forest is edged by streams. In these edge areas, there is more diversity of species than in the middle of the forest, field, or stream, and the diversity of species creates more fruitfulness. But the idea of margin also relates to human life. We speak of marginalized people and communities, understanding that exclusion impoverishes the whole body politic.

We learned to broaden our contemplative life by finding a "sit spot", a place where we could go to observe and also be part of, maybe a park bench or our own back yard. During those 15 or 30 minutes of sitting quietly, many of us became aware of a new richness in the sights, sounds, and textures of the natural world around us.

At the May 12 meeting, we moved from discussion to action: John and Evan arrived in a pickup truck full of great potting soil from Garfield Farm along with grow bags, seeds, and tomato and kale seedlings already sprouted and growing vigorously. Each participant gathered up what was wanted for planting at home, and so we each got started on our own food-growing project.





New Members!



Choir Wrap-up!



Worship in the Park!



PGH PRIDE MARCH

June Birthdays

June 4	David DeJong	June 15	Kelly Johnson	June 28	Lori Swensson
June 8	Kate Kennedy	June 18	Isabella Berg	June 29	Malachi Cornelius-Bates
June 9	Gloria Howe	June 19	Jean Moore		
June 11	Mary Lang	June 22	Kyle Miller		
June 13	Colin Miller	June 24	Chris McAdams		

July Birthdays

July 2	Brenda Flores	July 9	Kurt Thompson	July 20	Pamela Bower
July 6	Virginia McQuown	July 12	Joseph Ashenden	July 29	Thoren Vaux
July 7	Malena Howe	July 15	Cyndi Dickson	July 31	Cheryl Kubelick

Finance Committee Needs You!!

Are you looking for a way to get to connect with fellow members and volunteer for Sixth? Then the Finance Committee has opportunities for YOU! We are looking for:

- **Counters**– we are the people who count the Offering after Worship. We work in pairs and usually work each Sunday of a given month. But we are flexible so if you can't commit to 4 straight Sundays, that's ok, we can still use you.
- **Assistant Treasurer** – we are looking for someone to share the workload with Sixth Treasurer, Erik Fogt. Having a finance or accounting background would be helpful but a general knowledge of accounting is also fine. You will be trained on our accounting software and the Treasurer's responsibilities

That's it for the June update, with love,
please reach out to me at 417.222.1111

Next month from the Finance Committee will be a Tutorial on how to Pledge and Donate using our Online Portal.

Beth Hazlett, Finance Committee Chair

Session Meeting Highlights

Sixth Presbyterian Church– Wednesday, May 27, 2026

CALL TO ORDER/DEVOTIONAL TIME

CLERK'S REPORT:

- Worship: (In Person/You Tube – 4/26 (92/40); 5/3 (83/38); 5/10 (83/44); 5/17 (87/85); 5/24 (74/31) Pittsburgh Presbytery 2026 Meeting Schedule
 - ◊ Thursday, October 1-Crestfield Camp and Conference Center at 10:00 a.m. Elder Kate Davoli to attend
 - ◊ Thursday, December 10- TBD at 1:00 p.m.
- Clerk, Kathi Robinson-Dassel attended Minutes Reading at Pittsburgh Presbytery, May 6, 2026 to review the 2025 Minutes. The Minutes were approved with one exception (Baptism recorded in Minutes after completion, was not done).
- Austin Avery Brown was baptized during worship on April 19, 2026
- The following women were welcomed into membership on May 24, 2026 during worship: Ann Jones, who has been received into the membership of this congregation by transfer from First Presbyterian Church of North Platte, Nebraska, and Lissette Escariz, Gabriela Marinho dos Santos, and Jenna Goular, who have been received into the membership of this congregation by reaffirmation of faith.
- Chris Tyndall has requested to be removed from active membership.

PASTORAL REPORT:

- Continuing review of Administrative Manual
- Will continue to have casual gatherings throughout the summer
- Seminary Student - Michelle Zhou will join us in September as our 2026/2027 student.
- Will reach out again to touch base with committee/working group chairs.
- Discussed concerns about 9:30 a.m. start in the summer. Agreed to review decision during the August Session meeting.

EXECUTIVE AND SPECIAL COMMITTEE UPDATES:

- **Finance:** Elder Beth Hazlett gave a brief report
 - ◊ Non-pledge general fund less than anticipated
 - ◊ QR code access needs to include fees
- **Personnel:** Elder Sara DeLucia reported
 - ◊ Good discussions during staff reviews
 - ◊ Staff would like more clarity about Committee Restructuring
- **House:** Elder Leslie Kaplan shared that the furnace issue is still a work in progress.

COMMITTEE/WORKING GROUP REPORTS:

- **Nominating Committee:** The slate of officers has been determined. The Congregational Meeting will be held on June 14, 2026, for the election of the Deacon and Elder classes of 2029, with one seat still available on Session.
- **Church and Community:** The allocations of funds to various Sixth working groups and outside organizations have been determined.
- A report from **Peace & Justice working group** stated that Mohamed Ali, Pitt student. who was involved in the protests against Israel's violence against Palestinians, was their guest speaker at the meeting on May 10.
- The **Gun Safety** working group had hoped to repeat the Memorial to the Lost t-shirt display, but that touring event was discontinued.
- The Fellowship Committee is now called the **Kitchen Fellowship Crew**.
- The **Deacons** are putting together a process by which to update the Care List.
- **More Light** would like to encourage everyone to participate in the PRIDE events taking place June 7.

COFFEE HOUR ASSIGNMENTS: June 7– Pride participation encouraged, July 5– KFC

NEXT MEETING: June 17, 2026, 7 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT & CLOSING PRAYER

Respectfully Submitted, Kathi Robinson-Dassel, Clerk of Session

Church & Community’s Distribution of Locally Directed Mission Funds

Tom Twiss & Peter Kaplan

Church & Community (C&C) at Sixth is the working group responsible for distributing the funds Sixth Church sets aside for locally directed mission. This year, as in the past few years, the total amount that Session has made available for C&C to distribute is \$31,000. At its May 24th meeting, C&C received reports on the various groups within Sixth that it supports, and it completed most of its own 2026 allocations to organizations providing charitable assistance or advocating for social change.

Youth Group and Advocacy Working Groups

At our March meeting we allocated \$800 to the Youth Group to be distributed to worthy causes. We also gave \$1,887.50 to each of the four working groups at Sixth that are engaged in advocacy for social change (Earth Care, Gun Safety, Justice, and More Light). The four working groups were asked to distribute these funds to advocacy organizations or to use them for advocacy-related programs at Sixth. At our May 24 meeting C&C received reports from the Youth Group and the advocacy working groups on how they distributed their allocations:

Youth Group:	
Foster Love Project Pittsburgh	\$150
Reading Ready Pittsburgh	\$250
Hugh Lane Wellness Foundation	\$150
Hello, Neighbor	\$250
Total	\$800

Earth Care:	
Citizens' Climate Lobby	\$629.16
Food Rescue 412	\$629.17
Wild Indigo Guild	\$629.17
Total	\$1887.50

Gun Safety:	
CeaseFire PA	\$1,000.00
Heeding God’s Call	\$100.00
South Pittsburgh Coalition for Peace	\$787.50
Total	\$1887.50

More Light:	
Shepherd Wellness Community	\$562.00
SisTers PGH	\$562.00
Waverly Presbyterian Church /Donation to LAMP	\$562.00
Speakers Honoraria (set aside for this purpose, not yet spent)	\$200.00
Total Allocated to Date	\$1,886.00

Peace & Justice:	
Pennsylvania Interfaith Impact Network (PIIN)	\$300.00
Frontline Dignity	\$793.75
Total Allocated to Date	\$1,093.75

C&C Allocations for 2026

Following these reports, C&C voted to approve recommended allocations to twelve advocacy, direct assistance, and “hybrid” organizations (groups involved in both direct assistance and advocacy). Recommendations were determined by scores each organization received on five criteria:

- Participation in the organization by members of Sixth
- Financial need for funds Sixth could provide
- People of Color on the Board of Directors
- Faith-Based organizations

The allocation amounts approved by C&C were as follows:

Advocacy Organizations:		
Bread for the World	Educates and equips people to advocate for policies and programs that can help end hunger in the U.S. and around the world.	\$736.59
Pittsburgh United	A coalition of community, labor, faith, and environmental organizations committed to a community and economy that work for all.	\$1,104.88
Pittsburghers for Public Transit	A grassroots organization that advocates for an expanded, affordable and accessible public transit system.	\$1,473.17
Sabeel	A Palestinian Christian movement promoting justice, peace, and equality through faith, nonviolence, and inclusivity.	\$1,841.46

Direct Assistance Organizations:		
Fishes and Loaves	Provides food assistance primarily to Pittsburgh's Hazelwood neighborhood.	\$1,802.99
Lazarus Fund	An entity of the Pittsburgh Presbytery which provides grants to individuals to meet needs for housing, utilities and other necessities.	\$2,524.18
MHY Family Services	Provides individualized education and therapy programs for troubled youth and their families.	\$1,442.39
El Porvenir Nicaragua	A community of Nicaraguan peasants who grow organic coffee and beans for subsistence.	\$1,802.99
Wilkinsburg Community Ministry	Shares food with residents of Wilkinsburg and adjacent neighborhoods.	\$2,163.58

Hybrid Organizations:		
Casa San Jose	Provides direct assistance and advocates for Pittsburgh's Latino community	\$2,186.67
Church World Service	A faith-based organization providing just and sustainable responses to hunger and poverty around the globe	\$1,822.22
Just Harvest	Addresses hunger in Allegheny County at its root and offers services to low-income individuals	\$728.89

Rainy-Day Fund

Finally, each year C&C also sets aside 10% of its budget for emergency situations addressed by direct assistance organizations. C&C plans to make those "rainy day" allocations later this year.

MONTHLY HANGOUTS

Drop in once in a while or every time!



The deadline for June newsletter submissions is:
Monday, June 8th.

The June newsletter release date will be
Monday, June 15th.

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!

PUB THEOLOGY

1st Tuesdays – 7:30 PM – Location TBA
Starting August 4, 2026
Each month we'll have a theological topic to discuss and a book recommendation for those who want to read about it as well.

A WALK IN THE PARK

2nd Saturdays – 10:00 AM – Location TBA
Starting July 11, 2026
Each month we'll have a theological topic to discuss and a book to talk about for those who want to read about it as well.

MATCHA MONDAY

3rd Mondays – 4-6 PM – Kyo Matcha (5864 Forbes Ave)
Starting July 20, 2026
Pop in and hang out for some matcha tea or ice cream!

COFFEE SHOP OFFICE HOURS

Last Wednesdays – 8:30-10:15 AM –
Commonplace Coffee
Note the time change!
Come have a cup of coffee and hang out.



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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