

November

2015



SIXTH
presbyterian
CHURCH

Sixth Sense

From the Pastor

Do you ever think about your day planner and your bank statements as items that reflect your beliefs? What would someone say about you and I if they looked at our daily schedules, our debit card statements, or our credit card receipts? Don't all of these items reflect our priorities in life?

In the Law of Moses, the people of Israel were taught to bring their first fruits to God as a Temple sacrifice, and these first fruits were to be the best—a lamb without blemish, the purest grains, the most luscious fruit. God was to be given the first and the best. That was the nature of the tithe, a tenth portion given to the community in God's name—10% of one's gross income in today's language.

Our checkbooks, net worth statements, and estate plans speak volumes about what we believe. The custom of American culture is to take care of our own needs first as well as the needs of our families. Then we leave something to the church or to other charitable causes.

I am grateful to say that is not the practice of the saints at Sixth Presbyterian Church. For over 150 years, our congregation has been a model of generosity and service in this community, and that is entirely because the saints of Sixth, those who have gone on to their reward and those still active, have been an example of God's gracious generosity.

On November 1, All Saints Day, we are gathering to remember some of our great saints and to dedicate our financial commitments to the work of Sixth church in 2016. After you have changed your clocks the night before and slept in an extra hour, join us for brunch at 10am in the Ridinger Room (complete with a slide show of Sixth Saints down through the years) and worship at 11, when we will remember six particular saints at Sixth who have touched our lives and warm our memories.

If you have never made a pledge to the work of Sixth, begin this year. Even if it is as small as \$5 a week or \$25 a month, it will begin to teach you the discipline of regular giving, and it will help us to do all that God is calling us to do in ministry and mission and justice for the coming year.

Thank you for being a part of God's great work to build a more just, inclusive, and loving community, inside and outside our church walls.

Peace!

Vincent

November Worship and Preaching

November 1—“For All the Saints” We will be remembering six saints, living and triumphant, who have enriched our lives and we will be dedicating our financial pledges to the church.

November 8—Mark 12:28-34, “Not For Sale”

November 15—Mark 13:1-13, “Birthpangs”

November 22—John 18:33-37 “Living Truth”

November 29—Luke 21:25-36 “Be On Your Guard”

Welcome, New Members!



Robin Holtje attended Sixth Church for about 10 years before deciding to join this year. She was looking for a progressive church and was attracted to Sixth when she saw the rainbow flag.

She grew up in Broughton, Illinois and attended the church there where her mother was the Church secretary.

Robin is married to Christian, and they live in Squirrel Hill. They have three dogs and a ferret who keep her busy when she is not working – also with animals. For her work in animal husbandry, Robin is currently caring for mice and rats that are part of a research project.

John Dunmire came to Sixth from Community House Presbyterian Church on the Northside when he moved to Squirrel Hill.

He grew up in Burgettstown, PA, and has attended Presbyterian churches his whole life. In his search for spiritual growth and service, John found himself attracted to Sixth's "inclusion, love and commitment to justice, and [status as a] More Light Church."

In his working life, John is a litigation specialist with a focus on environmental suits. He also enjoys Theatre Arts and Music and quickly joined the Choir at Sixth. He is a big Star Trek fan and enjoys collecting memorabilia.



Little Holes in the Safety Net

The Deacons do not provide a safety net for people on the edge of desperation. That's a job too big for even government to do effectively. Rather, we circle the net looking for small tears to mend. How we do that falls into two main categories: The Sixth Presbyterian Board of Deacons helps to administer and review requests for grants under the Presbytery's Lazarus Fund. Those grants go to cover short-term critical needs such as keeping the heat on. The other part of our work is as diverse and ad-hoc as the needs and challenges people within our church and community experience. We stay tuned into people who may need support during a time of grief, illness or loss, or who may need our help to take advantage of an important opportunity. In the past, we have provided tuition support to a seminary student and helped young people wanting to go on a mission trip. Through the Household Helpers Program, we offer physical help ranging from changing a smoke alarm battery to repairing a door to providing a ride to a medical appointment.

In many ways, the Deacons are like the elves in the generous shoemaker's shop who came in while he slept and completed the last pair of shoes that he had to complete to avoid ruin.

This metaphor may be overly dramatic. I like it because it emphasizes how people can be helped quietly and in small ways that may make them feel watched over or even pulled back from the edge. I would encourage you to think about this story, or the idea of mending little rips in the safety net as you place money in the collection plate on the first Sunday of the month, contribute to the Lazarus Fund or check off "Deacons" on the yellow collection envelope.

— Rob Beswick



Mark and Elly Bertolet participating in CROP Walk 2015

Preparing for PIIN Public Action: Thursday, November 18

**TOWARD THE
BELOVED COMMUNITY**

FIGHTING FOR THE DREAM

NOV 18 2015 AT RODEF SHALOM 4905 FIFTH AVE PGH PA 15213
7:00PM-8:30PM DOORS AT 6:15PM

Join 2000 PIIN members, supporters & partners as we launch our long term agenda to end racial & economic inequity & secure commitments from local & state officials on public safety, jobs, education & ratepayer justice.	BUS ROUTES TO (or near) RODEF SHALOM: 71B, 71D, 28X, 58, 75, P3, 54, 71A, 71C, 93	PARKING: -CMU SURFACE LOT ON FORBES & MOREWOOD -CMU GARAGE AT FORBES & BEELER	CONTACT PIIN: OFFICE@PIIN.ORG 412-621-9230
--	--	---	--

I will be attending the big PIIN Public Action on Thursday, November 18 at Rodef Shalom largely for the reasons I enthusiastically joined in the unanimous vote of Session for affiliation with the Pennsylvania Interfaith Impact Network – because reconnecting with our identity leads us into our future.

The vote for PIIN affiliation came out of the busload of dedicated, concerned Sixth congregants who attended the last PIIN Public Action last February, helping to fill the Baptist Temple

Church in Homewood to show the new Pittsburgh Police Chief, Cameron McLay, that Pittsburghers are united in their commitment to sensible, neighborhood-oriented policing.

The PIIN affiliation followed the meeting at church with police officers from Zone Four, and the work with the PIIN Public Safety Committee and Ratepayers’ Campaign, and more.

Most importantly, the PIIN affiliation derives from the comments, observations, and recommendations expressed by many of the nearly 100 congregants who participated in the Listening Campaign last spring, reaffirming the longstanding social justice identity of Sixth Church. Which means that the commitment to join sisters and brothers of faith in the streets and in assemblies, to do justice, is a basic part of who we are. It’s in our institutional DNA.

I’ll be there with so many of you on November 18 because caring about our neighbors and our common future is what we do. Attending the November 18 Public Action is about building power – having elected officials face two thousand or more people filling that room at Rodef Shalom is what power looks like – power to effect the kinds of changes we at Sixth would like to see in our community, in our nation, and in our world.

As PIIN brings those of us of faith, of many faiths, together to “fight for the dream” and “move toward the beloved community,” I know that where I will want to be – alongside our congregation, working to build the Kingdom.

– Peter Gilmore



Some members of the Presbyterian Women Lunch Bunch. Back row: Carol Emerson, Mary Lou Kehm, Aldora Watt, Norma Farquhar. Front row: Millie Barnes, Jane Fox, Maggie Ritchey, Glenda Rosenberry, and Louise Ford. PW meets at Sixth the second Wednesday of each month for a Bible lesson and lunch afterward in the community.

Dear Friends,

I have been working with the Washington County Gay Straight Alliance for a long time – and I am really excited to say we will be hosting our 3rd Transgender Day of Remembrance on Nov. 20. Please think about venturing down the interstate and joining us for this moving event. The walk is student organized and led and honors transgender people who have died due to violence, hate and discrimination. Contact me if you need more info and directions!

–Jenny Newman
 Jennyrunew@gmail.com



CANDLELIGHT WALK

Friday, November 20, 2015 @ 6:00 p.m.

Meet at:

First Presbyterian Church, 1793
 100 East Wheeling Street, Washington, PA

Honoring Transgender people who have died due to violence, hate, and discrimination.



“Embracing Diversity, Promoting Equality”

Adult Speaker Series

“Why Should I Come to a Public Action?”

Join us as we welcome Rev. Rodney Lyde, Pastor of Temple Baptist Church in Homewood, to talk about the upcoming agenda of PIIN’s Public Action at Rodef Shalom Synagogue on Wednesday, November 18, at 7pm.

Tween Meetup

Youth in 4th through 7th grade are invited for bowling and fellowship from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. on Sunday Nov. 1 at Forward Lanes (5844 Forward Ave.) Please RSVP to Jenny Newman to attend at Jennyrunew@gmail.com and bring a friend!

Save the Dates!

Mark your calendars for these December youth-hosted volunteer projects at the church:

Dec. 4: Babysitting Night from 6 to 9 at the church. Parents, we invite you to drop off your kids (ages 12 and under) and enjoy a night out.

Dec. 19: Present Wrapping from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Do you hate to wrap presents? Let us do it for you. Drop off your gifts and we will get them ready for the holidays. We will provide wrapping paper or you can provide your own.

We will accepting donations for both events that will benefit youth mission.

Reminder: Parents, please be reminded that there will be no Sunday school on November 1 so families can attend the Stewardship Breakfast together. There will be nursery care for infants and toddlers beginning at 10 a.m. and we will have Extended Session during worship as usual.

Youth Group Happenings

“Food for Thought”: Sunday school class for junior and senior high is held each week (9:50 - 10:45) at Bruegger’s. Join Amy Whipple and special guest stars for discussion on the week’s scripture passages, current events, and other assorted topics.

Bowling Night: Youth are invited for fellowship and bowling on Friday, Nov. 13 from 6 to 8 p.m. at Forward Lanes (5844 Forward Lanes). Please RSVP to Jenny Newman at Jennyrunew@gmail.com if you can attend,

Crazy Mocha: Come for coffee and conversation at Crazy Mocha on Murray Ave. from 6 to 7:30 p.m. on **Thursdays, Nov. 12 and 19.**

Please mark your calendar for these volunteering opportunities in December:

Friday, Dec. 4 from 6 to 9 p.m. **Babysitting Night.** Youth volunteers are needed to help play with and kids so our church parents can have a night out.

Saturday, Dec. 19 from 11 to 3 p.m. **Present Wrapping:** Youth volunteers are needed to come wrap presents for church members and friends.

Questions or need more info?

Contact Jenny Newman at Jennyrunew@gmail.com or (412) 720-6392.

Youth Service Projects



East End Community House

Meg Cummings, Elizabeth Drake, Sonia Panic, and Jenny Neman get a little silly while they volunteer to cook and serve a meal for residents at the East End Community House. Also getting a little silly that night were Trish Calloway, David Miller, and Katherine Drake who also volunteered. You can sign up to volunteer at EECH and get more information by contacting Trish Calloway or visiting the bulletin board in the Sixth Chapel.

Book 'em

Emma Bisello, Anne Ward, Glenna Van Dyke, and Jenny Newman spent a Sunday afternoon in September volunteering at Book 'em, located in the Thomas Merton Center on Penn Ave. Book 'em sends free educational books and quality reading material to prisoners in Pennsylvania. Our group spent time reading letters from inmates, selecting books and getting them ready for mailing.

To find out more about Book 'em visit their website at <http://www.bookempgh.org>



Gun Safety: Concerns Here at Home

Why is gun safety important to us as members of Sixth Presbyterian? The following letter was posted on Facebook earlier this fall by my friend and neighbor here in Squirrel Hill, Josh Knauer.

Desean Fountain, a 14 year old boy who was an 8th grade classmate of my daughter died last night after being shot a week ago as he was walking home from school. Desean was African American and lived in a lower-income neighborhood. He also was an incredibly nice kid who, according to all accounts, "stayed out of trouble." (a phrase that's need for inclusion bothers me tremendously) There was barely a mention in the news the day he was shot, and the announcement of his death came with the same anemic coverage. As of right now there's a \$1000 reward offered for information about the crime. No suspects, no outcry from the community, no political leaders involved. It should be noted that the school they attend provided excellent counseling and support to the kids.

Compare this to the news a month ago (end of July) that a few white people were robbed at gunpoint by black youth in the extremely wealthy (and predominantly white) neighborhood in which our family lives and I work. There was round the clock, team news coverage with big rewards offered for info about the crime. I received email, twitter and facebook alerts from elected officials, the police and others documenting their response and warning everyone about the issue. I was told "this will not be tolerated" and "the entire community is responding".

My daughter asked me the other day, "Where's that kind of response for Desean? Is it because he was black and lived in the wrong neighborhood? How come no one cares?" Obviously, the answers to these questions are unequivocally "yes" which absolutely sucks and to me continues to be unacceptable.

The only thing I know I can do right now is point out these disparities and continue to teach my kids that they are very real. We need to do better than this. We need to be better than this.

Dan Gilman, Bill Peduto... where's the leadership from the City on this? I'm not just complaining, please plug me in if there are substantive efforts under way to address #blacklivesmatter systemically here.

You and I may be asking, "What can we do to alleviate this pain of gun violence?" There are avenues in our community through which we can work toward making a difference.

- Cease Fire PA is a statewide coalition of mayors, police chiefs, faith leaders, community organizations and individuals working together to take a stand against gun violence. This group works through advocacy and education, especially as pertains to state legislative action.
- PIIN (Pennsylvania Interfaith Impact Network) is a coalition of congregations concerned with a social injustice, including gun safety.
- Write, email, or phone local, state and national lawmakers about gun legislation. CeaseFirePA is a good source of current issues and contact information.
- VOTE! Find out the positions of candidates on gun safety issues.
- Attend meetings of the Sixth Presbyterian Gun Safety Committee to find out more. The next meeting will be early December - watch for notice in the service bulletin.

—Martha Funderburgh

From the Gun Safety Committee

The PA State Police believe that over 17 years the state Background Check System blocked gun sales to 150,000 people not legally allowed to possess firearms. Loopholes in the law enable some people to unlawfully buy guns by circumventing background checks. For more information on how to take action on this issue, see www.ceasefirepa.org - Issue Action Center.

Sixth Church and God's Creation

"Despair is not an option!" said Rod Elder, our Tuesday Night speaker on October 13. He had just finished telling us that 2014 was the warmest year in the history of earth's recorded temperature, that there are no more glaciers in Glacier National Park, that the oceans are rising as the glaciers melt, that the Atlantic Ocean will be 16 inches higher along our east coast by 2100, and that the oceanic food chain is being disrupted by acidification caused by warming waters.

The 20-odd people in the room all agreed that human activity is causing global warming. Indeed, if human activity is causing global warming, then we humans can hope that we can slow and eventually stop the process.

But how? During the discussion that followed Rod's presentation, we talked about the importance of individual action and about what we can do through our municipal, state, and federal governments.

As individuals, we've been reducing, reusing, and recycling for a while now, and it's making a difference! We now need to step up reducing and reusing so that we don't need to recycle as much: think plastic bags and bottles. And we need to continue to make improvements in our energy use in our homes and vehicles.

Governmental action is what happens when enough of us work together for change. Our federal government has been making a difference: the Environmental Protection Agency has raised fuel economy standards for cars and trucks and is trying, against resistance from some states, to issue carbon pollution standards for new power plants. The EPA Clean Power Plan establishes state-by-state targets for carbon emissions reductions. Locally, Pittsburgh is working with the National Energy Technology Laboratory and the U.S. Department of Energy to bring our energy infrastructure into the 21st century. And because of public advocacy, fracking for natural gas is not happening within the city.

So it's clear that each of us as an individual and also we as citizens of our cities, states, and country are important. But what about our strength in smaller groups, and in particular as a church congregation? During discussion, the excellent question was asked, "How can we as a group make an impact to reverse global warming?" As you know, we're applying to become a Presbyterian Earth Care Congregation. But what difference will that actually make, and how can we maximize our effort and our impact?

As we think about that question together, let's listen to some words from Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si: On Care for our Common Home*:

"...local individuals and groups can make a real difference. They are able to instill a greater sense of responsibility, a strong sense of community, a readiness to protect others, a spirit of creativity and a deep love for the land. They are also concerned about what they will eventually leave to their children and grand children..."

To be watching: run-up to the Paris climate talks, 11/30 to 12/11/2015. For great info, go to www.cop21.gouv.fr/en

—Nora Johnson



November 2015 – Events and Birthdays

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Louise Craft 10 am Stewardship Breakfast 11 am Worship 12:30 pm Nominating Committee 12:30 pm Tween Meet Up 2 pm Fiberarts Guild 8 pm NA	2 Joshua Henry Bell Oliver Andrew Broughton-Blood 7 pm Knit Night (off-site)	3 Andrew DeJong	4 11 am Bible Study 7 pm Western PA Coalition for Single Payer Healthcare	5 Mary Crossley 6 pm Worship Committee 7:30 pm Choir practice	6 Megan Fogt	7 7 pm NA
8 9:50 am Sunday School 10 am More Light Committee 11 am Worship 12:30 pm Executive Committee 8 pm NA	9	10 7 pm What's Happening at the Public Action?	11 11 am Bible Study 7:15 pm Deacons	12 Nancy Wells 6 pm Youth Group at Crazy Mocha 7:30 pm Choir practice	13 Luke Chrissis 6 pm Youth Bowling Night	14 Gabriel Yancy 10 am Course in Miracles (outside group) 7 pm NA
15 Joan Gaul Judy Giddings 9:50 am Sunday School 11 am Worship 12:30 pm Executive Committee 8 pm NA	16 Jack Johnston Grace Brennan Brian Lazarus 7 pm Knit Night (off-site)	17	18 11 am Bible Study 7 pm PIIN Public Action No Session Meeting	19 Elijah Perry 6 pm Youth Group at Crazy Mocha 7:30 pm Choir practice	20	21 Bob Robinson- Dassel 7 pm NA
22 9:50 am Sunday School 11 am Worship 2 pm Alopecia support group 8 pm NA	23 Lucy Brennan	24 Tony Schryer	25 Laura Sindhi 11 am Bible Study	26	27 Robin Holtje Elena Berg	28 10 am Course in Miracles (outside group) 7 pm NA
29 Dan Brennan 9:50 am Sunday School 11 am Worship 8 pm NA	30 Joshua Yancy					

Coffee Sale

Get Ready for the Holidays

Sixth Presbyterian partners with Building New Hope to sell fresh roasted coffee. Additional order forms are available in the back of the Sanctuary, the Chapel, and in the church office.

1lb Bag \$13

1lb Bag (decaffeinated) \$14

(please specify ground or whole bean.)



Please place your order and payment to the church office by Nov. 22 .

The coffee will be available to pick up following worship on Dec. 6.

The coffee will be fresh roasted the week before it is delivered.

The coffee comes from El Porvenir in Nicaragua which has been a mission trip destination and partner with Sixth Presbyterian groups. The purchase of this coffee is at a fair market price and will help to provide a living wage for the farmers. It enables the families to stay on their land, reinvest in their communities and improve their lives. A small portion of this sale per bag will benefit Sixth youth mission trips.

For more information Building New Hope, please visit their website at www.buildingnewhope.org.

Coffee Order Form

Sixth Presbyterian Church

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email address: _____

_____ 1lb Bag, \$13 ___ ground ___ whole bean

_____ 1lb Bag Decaffeinated, \$14 ___ ground ___ whole bean

Total amount due: _____

Please return order form and payment to Jenny Newman or the church office by Nov 22. Coffee will be available following worship on Dec. 6. Make checks payable to Sixth Presbyterian Church with "Coffee Sales" noted in the memo line.

Sixth Presbyterian Church
1688 Murray Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15217
Phone: 412-421-2752
Email: office@sixthchurch.org
Website: 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.

Chris's Quotes...

By Christine Tyndall

"Simplicity, carried to the extreme, becomes elegant." – Jon Franklin

"Simplicity is making the journey of life with just baggage enough." – Charles Dudley Warner

"Words are mere bubbles of water, but deeds are drops of gold." – Chinese proverb



The Deadline for the December newsletter is November 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!