

March 2018



SIXTH
presbyterian
CHURCH

Sixth Sense

From the Pastor

During this season of Lent, I'm drawn to the words of those before us. This month, I'd like to share with you these thoughts from scholar and theologian Walter Brueggemann:

We are on the road again! As followers of Jesus, we are on the road again in Lent, walking the way of obedience to Jerusalem for the big showdown with the authorities of church and state. It turns out, every time, to be a hazardous journey, full of toils and snares, potholes and adversaries, ending in a rigged trial. But people of faith are always on the road again, departing safe places, running risks, and hoping for well-being on the journey.

And if we ponder our destination, perhaps it is to be to the neighborhood of shalom, the neighborhood of shared resources, of inclusive politics, of random acts of kindness and intentional acts of justice, of fearless neighborliness that is not propelled by greed or anxiety or excessive self-preoccupation.

I imagine Lent for you and me as a great departure from the greedy, anxious anti-neighborliness of our economy, a great departure from our exclusionary politics that fears the other, a great departure from self-indulgent consumerism that devours creation. And then an arrival in a new neighborhood. Why? Because *"it is a gift to be simple, it is a gift to be free; it is a gift to come down where we ought to be."*

Peace!

Vincent

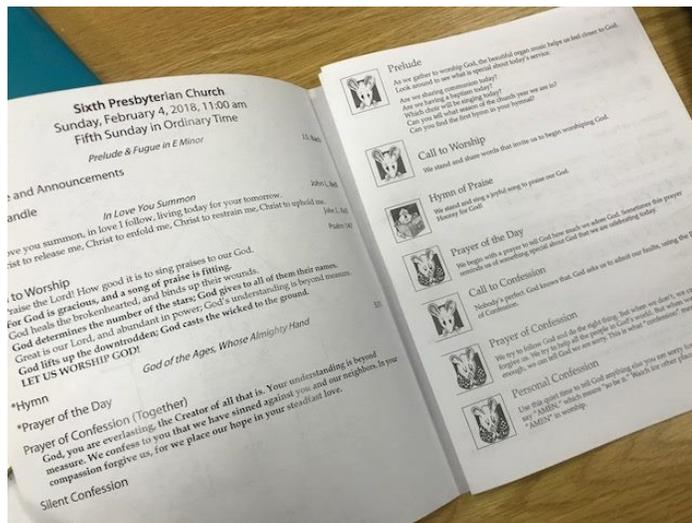
March Worship and Preaching

March 4—I Corinthians 1:18-31, "Called Against Distortion"

March 11—John 3:14-21, "A Love Song Called John 3:16"

March 18—John 12:20-33, "Unless A Grain Falls"

March 25—Mark 11:1-11, "A Tale of Two Parades"



We've added a children's bulletin to our Sunday service! To learn more about what we're doing to teach children about worship, see Jenny's article starting on page 3.

Sixth Church and God's Creation

The Swissvale Shade Tree Advisory Committee (SSTAC) was formed more than three years ago, to report to the Swissvale Borough Council concerning street tree care. SSTAC has five volunteer members, all residents of Swissvale, and all with an interest in the environment. Committee service is a way for us to give back to our small community and to express our concern for preserving natural resources. We have attended workshops and other training opportunities to learn about urban forests, to better serve the Borough.

One of the committee's first assigned tasks was to write a Street Tree Ordinance for Swissvale. We produced the ordinance, along with Guidelines for Arbor Work, and a list of approved street trees. Street trees are planted in rights-of-way, such as public areas (parks, playgrounds) and along street curbs. A good street tree is long-lived, sturdy, and as free of pests/diseases as possible. We recommend planting the right tree in the right place, meaning that the tree, when full-grown, should not interfere with traffic, electrical wires, underground pipes, etc.

SSTAC works closely with the Urban Forest Manager at Nine Mile Run Watershed Association (NMRWA), based in Wilkinsburg. We receive sound advice, plus help in coordinating events. In turn, we advise the Swissvale Department of Public Works about tree care. Using tree data collected from area volunteers such as SSTAC members, plus a professional tree inventory company, NMRWA staff have created an inventory/map of existing trees in the borough. SSTAC members check on listed trees and assess condition, reporting back to the borough about trees in need of removal or pruning. SSTAC acts as a resource for information on tree-related issues.



The committee plans 3-5 public events each year, including spring/fall tree mulching, tree plantings, and Arbor Day celebrations. To fund tree plantings, we have applied for grants to TreeVitalize, which no longer funds projects outside the City of Pittsburgh. We are looking at other grants now, and at fund-raising for our projects. Last year, SSTAC applied for and received Swissvale's first Tree City USA designation from the Arbor Day Foundation, and we hope for a second one this year. The application was approved at the state level and just needs to be passed by the Foundation itself.

Speaking of mulching events, SSTAC members and volunteers will be weeding and mulching tree pits along Washington Avenue in the Swissvale Business District on **April 28**. Everyone is welcome to join us from 9 am to about noon that Saturday; if you can't do physical work, you can provide moral support to the team! The Borough has the mulch, and SSTAC provides the rest. We will publicize the event through Arbor Day, April 27, and are giving free tree seedlings to interested folks on the 28th.

The urban tree canopy has declined in the Pittsburgh area due to tree age and disease, but especially from increased development. Development is part of city life, but sustainable progress means considering stormwater control, flooding potential, energy savings, and more. Native trees and plants provide many benefits to the public. In recognition of this, most municipalities now have tree committees such as SSTAC.

—Heather Lyle

Teaching Kids to Worship: All the Parts!

Our church website states that we are a congregation that welcomes children in worship because it matters to us that they know they know they are part of our faith community.

One of my main focuses here at Sixth recently has been to help us live out that statement more fully. I think about this every single time we baptize a child in our sanctuary. In our baptism liturgy, we all – together – promise to teach the children and support parents as the kids grow up as part of our church family. This includes teaching our children how to worship.

In addition to teaching kids about all the parts of the worship service their meanings, it is equally important to teach them how to "be" in worship and what we "do" in worship. Knowing when to stand up, sit down, read out loud, and when it's okay to talk and move around the sanctuary will help our children feel comfortable and welcome. They will be more open to fully participate in the experience of worshiping God together with their church family.

So far this year, we have been working hard to help our children adapt to the rhythm of our weekly service. We are making new children's bulletins each week in an effort to teach the kids to read along. We also are working to familiarize them with the responses sung in church. We have been posting links of recordings of the responses and having our Sunday school teachers review the words just before they head into worship.

If you are sitting with or near children during worship please help us encourage them to follow along with the bulletin and in the hymnals. Our new children's bulletins outline all the parts of worship with an explanation of their meanings. I am sharing them here - with some additional tips on how to "be" and what we "do."

Prelude: The prelude begins just before church starts as we gather for worship. The prelude music is carefully chosen and practiced by our music director and helps get us ready to worship. During this time people are often getting settled in their seats, praying, and saying hello to those around them. It is okay to quietly move around the sanctuary as you get settled in your seats, but please be quiet and respectful to those who are praying, listening to the prelude and preparing themselves for worship. Occasionally there will be special musicians and instrumentalists playing alone or with the choir.

Introit: The choir will sing music selected to begin worship. During this music the Christ candle is lit and water is poured in to the baptismal font. This is a time for everyone to sit quietly and stay in their seats.

Call to Worship: We stand together and read words that invite us to begin worship.

Hymns: We begin worship with a hymn. The hymns throughout the service are chosen to relate to the scriptures we will hear, the sermon and the season of the church year. We stand and sing together. During the hymns is okay to move about quietly in the sanctuary and come forward to light a peace candle at the front of the church.

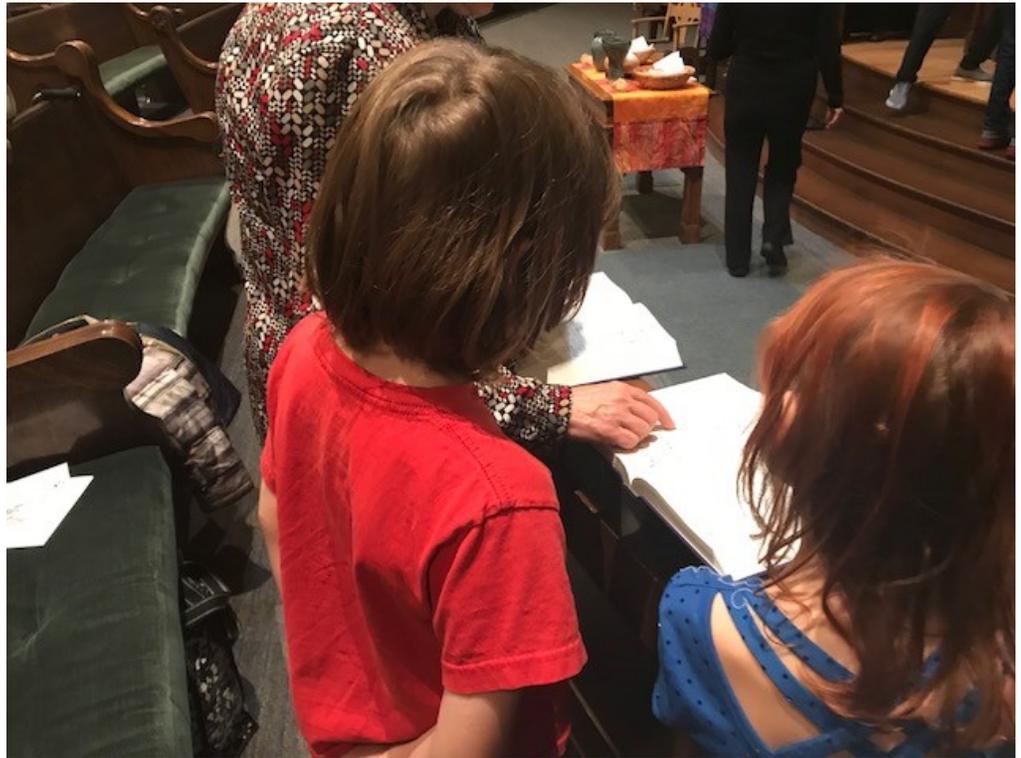
Prayer of the Day: We stand and hear a prayer for our time together in worship.

Prayer of Confession: We sit down and read together the Prayer of Confession that is printed in the bulletin. During this confession we are together asking God to forgive us for times when we have not done the right things. We try to help all the people in God's world but when we don't we can tell God we are sorry. That is what "confession" means.

Silent Confession: During this time we remain silent, close our eyes, and pray in our heads about the things we want to tell God.

Response/Assurance of Pardon: We sing together and then listen as the Pastor tells us the Good News that God forgives us! Then, we stand sing in praise together.

Time for Children: The children in the sanctuary are invited to come forward and hear a story about God's Love for us.



Exchange of Peace: We stand and greet those around us by shaking hands and sharing the peace God's love with God's family. We can "Peace be with you," and answer "and also with you."

Prayer for Illumination: This is a prayer that we read together from the bulletin. We ask that the Holy Spirit help us to understand God's words that will be read from the Bible and the sermon we are about to hear. "Illumination" means "turning the light on."

Scripture Readings: We listen as scripture from the Bible is read by the worship leaders. Readings can be from the Old Testament or the New Testament. When scripture from one of the four Gospels are read (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) the worship leader will invite people to stand if they are able. If you need to move around or leave the sanctuary, please wait until the readings are finished.

Sermon: The Pastor of the church or worship leader will talk about what the scripture readings mean and what we can learn about God's love for us. This can sometimes feel like a long time to sit still! If you need to move around or leave the sanctuary, please wait until the sermon is finished.

Affirmation of Faith: We stand together and read from the bulletin words that state what we believe as a church family.

Prayers of the People: The Pastor will lead the congregation in prayer and ask for church members to share a brief prayer. We will respond to each prayer by saying together, "God in your mercy, hear our prayer." We conclude this prayer time by saying the Lord's Prayer.

Offering: This is the time when people called "Ushers" will move around the church with collection plates and gather the congregation's gifts to the church. Our gifts support the work of the church and we give to God because God gives so much to us.

Anthem: During the offering, the choir will sing or special music will be played that helps us worship God. The words that the choir is singing is often printed in the bulletin for you to read

along! Please stay in your seats and listen to what the words and music say about God.

Doxology: After the Offering, the ushers will bring forward the offering plates while we sing the Doxology. This is a Greek word that means "to give God Glory." The words are printed in the bulletin to sing along.

Prayer of Thanksgiving: The Pastor will stand with the Ushers and lead us in a prayer to God of thanks for the gifts to do God's work.

Benediction and Postlude: The pastor will end the service with the benediction which means "good word." The "good word" is that God goes with us into the world to do God's work. The postlude is joyful music played to send our time together

Worship information adapted from *A Children's Guide to Worship* by Ruth Boling, Lauren Muzzy, and Laurie Vance.

Youth Happenings, March

Sunday School: Sunday school class for junior and senior high is held each week (10 - 10:45 am) upstairs in Jenny Newman's new office (formerly Gail's music office). Join Amy Whipple and special guest stars for discussion on the week's scripture passages, current events, and other assorted topics. There will be donuts and drinks!

Weekly Youth Fellowship: Youth are invited for coffee and conversation at Crazy Mocha on Murray Ave. from 6 to 7:30 pm on Thursdays, March 1, 8, 15, and 22.

For more info Contact Jenny Newman at (412) 720-6392 or Jenny@Sixthchurch.org

Mark Your Calendars!

Palm Sunday Family Potluck

5 to 7 pm Sunday, March 25 in the Chapel



Bring a dish to share and join us for fellowship, crafts and Holy Week activities for all ages

Hosted by the Christian Education Committee

Session Notes: January 2018

JANUARY 3

CLERK'S REPORT

Worship Attendance: 135 on 12/3, 140 on 12/10, 201 on 12/17, 99 on 12/24 (am), 211 on 12/24(pm), 75 on 12/31.

A motion was made, seconded and approved to have Jen Joy as our Clerk of Session for 2018.

EXAMINATION OF NEW ELDERS AND DEACONS

Our new Elders, Mary Radcliffe and Marcus Robinson and new Deacons, Joe Ashenden, Leila Richards, and Jason Schifflet were examined and approved by the Session. Heather Lyle was unable to make the meeting because of transportation issues, and will be examined by a small group of elders on 1/21.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Finance: Elder Erik Fogt reviewed the Financial Report prepared by Maggie Ritchey, Treasurer. He then introduced the 2018 Budget.

It was moved, seconded, and passed to 'zero out' the deficits in the following designated accounts: #266-Women's Weekend (\$956.40), #271-Hymnal/Books in Transit (\$1,103.62), and #280-ther Retreats (\$2,484.88) from the end of 2017 surplus.

He stated if there were back bills that need to be paid out of the 2017 Budget, they should be submitted by 1/10/ 18.

HOUSE

It was moved, seconded, and passed to pay the remainder of the unpaid bill from Greg Heisler, \$4,200, from the 2017 surplus. (He had incorrectly invoiced us for only half of the amount.)

Elder Leslie Kaplan will do tours of the church to see needed repairs on January 7 and 14 immediately after the worship service for all who wish to see them.

Elder Kaplan also stated that she has submitted to the Historical and Landmark Association a Grant application for \$10,000.

Stewardship

Elder Lauren Ward reported that our Budget for 2018 exceeded its goal of \$320,000 by \$3,000 to 4,000, and there may still be additional pledges yet to be received.

She distributed A Case of Campaign Support Winter 2018 for a second reading. The final draft will be submitted to the Session for review at the 1/24 meeting. It was moved, seconded, and passed that the mission portion of the Case for Support be \$20,000, equal to the annual charitable distribution of the C&C committee.

PERSONNEL

Elder Barbara Pares stated that the Annual Reviews are completed.

NEW BUSINESS

The new Session will meet with the incoming Session to facilitate the “hand off” of responsibilities on 1/24. It was moved, seconded and passed to set the date for the Annual Congregational Meeting for 1/28/18, immediately following worship.

– Millie Barnes, outgoing Clerk of Session

JANUARY 24

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the January 3 Meeting and the Called Meeting of January 14 were approved with one correction: that Elder Barbara Parees reported that the Annual Reviews of the staff are not completed.

CLERK’S REPORT

Worship Attendance: 110 on 1/7, 90 on 1/14, and 121 on 1/21.

A letter was received from Pittsburgh United thanking us for our contribution.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Finance: Elder Eric Fogt reviewed the December Financial Report. The total Income for the month of December was \$36,562.55. The expenses were \$40,590.50.

He then reviewed the 2018 Budget and made a motion that was seconded and approved to approve the 2018 Budget.

Stewardship: motion Elder Lauren Ward made a motion that was seconded and approved to approve “A Case of Campaign Support Winter 2018 and the FAQ Sheet”. Church Members are encouraged to come to the Breakfast on January 28 at 10am when the Stewardship Chair, Lauren Ward and House Chair, Leslie Kaplan will explain the projects to be undertaken.

Pastor Kolb reviewed the Stewardship History from 2015 to 2018. The pledges in 2015 were \$275,222. and have gone up each year to 2018 when they are \$324,146.75.

Personnel: Elder Barb Parees made a motion that was seconded and approved that the Pastor’s Terms of Call be approved by the Session and recommended to the Congregation for their approval on January 24.

Session Handoff:

Papers were placed on the walls of the room with a Committee Title on each one. The Elders who were chairs of the committees were asked to write the duties of the Committee on each sheet.

Elders were asked to put their name on the Committee they would like to serve on and the position they would like to have on the Committee. Then committee assignments will be made.

Next Session Meeting: The Session decided they would like to try the 4th Wednesday of the month. The next Session meeting will be February 28, 2018 at 7:30pm.

Appreciations. Appreciation was expressed to Joe DeLucia, Peter Gilmore and Verna Robinson who had completed their term and to Millie Barnes who has completed time as Clerk of Session and each was given a gift of coffee.

– Jen Joy, Clerk of Session

Welcome, New Members!



**Cyndi Dickson; Karen Horgan; Lori King;
Opal Middleton (not pictured); Mark
Panichella; Shawn Patton, April Clisura, and
Jillian; Gregory Winner**



Family Overnight Retreat 2018



May 12-13

Sixth families are invited for a time of fun and fellowship at Camp Crestfield. Plan to arrive at Camp Crestfield at 10 a.m. Saturday and we will conclude with a casual worship service on Sunday morning.

Families will be staying in Scott Lodge and meals will include lunch and dinner Saturday and breakfast on Sunday. We will have a campfire, a hayride and other activities including rock climbing and canoes.

To register, please fill out the registration form below and return it with payment to Jenny Newman in the church office by **Sunday, April 8.**

Questions? Contact Jenny at 412-720-6392 or Jenny@sixthchurch.org.

Retreat Registration

Names: *(Please list all family members attending and ages of children)*

Please list any dietary or physical restrictions for any of your family members attending:

Amount Paid _____

Contact Information (Phone, email) _____

Cost:

- \$125** for families of 2
- \$150** for families of 3
- \$175** for families of 4 or more

Note: The actual cost of the retreat 75.75 per person for ages 11 and up, \$35.25 per person for ages 5 to 10. Children age 4 and under are free. If the actual cost for your family is less than the amount listed above, please pay the lower amount!

We have financial help available if needed. Contact Jenny Newman for more info.

Fracking In Our Future?

“Every Nation on the planet, except the US, has recognized the dire threat of climate change and is committed to carbon reductions. Currently, the state of Pennsylvania has fully embraced frack gas which is just as big a threat to our climate as coal. We must redirect their attention to advance clean energy and clean energy jobs. Working together, we can change our future for our children and their children.”— Larry Schweiger



Our speaker: Larry Schweiger

is a leading voice in the environmental movement nationally and in Pennsylvania. He is currently the Chapter Co-Chair of the Climate Reality Project here in Pittsburgh. He has also served as President and CEO of PennFuture, the National Wildlife Federation, and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.

Saturday, March 24 at 7:00 PM
Sixth Presbyterian Church
1688 Murray Ave.
Squirrel Hill, Pittsburgh

Seating is limited, please register online at
www.sixthchurch.org/fracking or call 412-421-2752.



SIXTH
presbyterian CHURCH



Preschool and Kindergarten



Megan Fogt



Malena Howe

First -3rd Grade



Linda May



Cyndi Dickson



7th-12th Grade



Amy Whipple

3rd Grade-6th Grade



Verna Robinson



Chris Pistorius

Nursery



Jenn McCartney



Clove Rose



Meredith Harrison



Emma Zentarsky



Bree Bolton



Sonia Panic



Izzy Nelson

Extended Session



Hanna Pistorius



Bela Berg



Malena Howe



Gregson Vaux

March 2018 – Events and Birthdays

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
4 Pam Howe Katie Kaplan 10:00 am, Adult Sunday School 10:00 am, Sunday School 11:00 am, Worship 12:00 pm, Christian Education Committee 12:00 pm, Larry Schweiger Planning 2:00 pm, Alopecia Support Group 8:00 pm, NA	5 7:00 pm, NA	6	7	8 Jordan Lowe Greg Nestor 6:00 pm, Youth Group (Crazy Mocha) 7:30 pm, Choir	9 Linda Davoli	10 10:00 am, Course in Miracles (outside group) 7:00 pm, NA
11 10:00 am, Adult Sunday School 10:00 am, Called Session Meeting 10:00 am, Sunday School 11:00 am, Worship 12:00 pm, Household Helper Meeting 12:00 pm, More Light Committee 8:00 pm, NA	12 7:00 pm, NA	13 Joseph DeLucia	14 11:00 am, Bible Study	15 6:00 pm, Youth Group (Crazy Mocha) 7:30 pm, Choir	16	17 Wilson Juring Glenda Rosenberry Rohan Vaux 7:00 pm, NA

March 2018 – Events and Birthdays

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
18 10:00 am, Adult Sunday School 10:00 am, Sunday School 11:00 am, Worship 8:00 pm, NA	19 7:00 pm, NA	20	21 Winter Cornelius-Bates 11:00 am, Bible Study 7:15 pm, Deacons	22 6:00 pm, Youth Group (Crazy Mocha) 7:30 pm, Choir	23	24 10:00 am, Course in Miracles (outside group) 7:00 pm, Larry Schweiger-Fracking In Our Future? 7:00 pm, NA
25 Emma Cooper 10:00 am, Adult Sunday School 10:00 am, Sunday School 11:00 am, Worship 5:00 pm, Family Palm Sunday Potluck 8:00 pm, NA	26 Malakai Whipple 7:00 pm, NA	27	28 11:00 am, Bible Study 7:30 pm, Session	29 7:00 pm, Maundy Thursday	30	31 Jeffery Kaplan 10:00 am, Choir practice 7:00 pm, NA

Coffee for Sale!

We have coffee for sale! Stop by the church office to buy a bag of coffee from our mission partners in El Porvenir!

Regular or dark roast ground or whole bean: **\$13**

Decaf ground or whole bean: **\$14**



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 April newsletter is March 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...

“At start of spring I open a trench
In the ground. I put into it
The winter’s accumulation of paper,
Pages I do not want to read
Again, useless words, fragments,
errors. And I put into it
the contents of the outhouse:
light of the suns, growth of the
ground,
Finished with one of their journeys.
To the sky, to the wind, then,
and to the faithful trees, I confess

my sins: that I have not been happy
enough, considering my good luck;
have listened to too much noise,
have been inattentive to wonders,
have lusted after praise.
And then upon the gathered refuse,
of mind and body, I close the trench
folding shut again the dark,
the deathless earth. Beneath that seal
the old escapes into the new.”
— Wendell Berry