

March 2019

Sixth Sense

From the Pastor

In many cultures there is an ancient custom of giving a tenth of each year's income to some holy use. For Christians, to observe 40 days of Lent is to do the same thing with roughly a tenth of each year's days.

After being baptized by John in the river Jordan, Jesus went off alone into the wilderness where he spent 40 days asking himself what it meant to be Jesus. During Lent, we as people of faith, are supposed to ask what it means to be ourselves.

If we had to bet everything we have on whether there is a God or whether there isn't, which side would get our wager and why?

When we look at our faces in the mirror, what do we see in it that we most like and who do we see in it that we most deplore?

If we had one last message to leave to the handful of people who are most important to us, what would it be?

Of all the things we have done in this life, which is the one we would most like to undo? Which is the one that makes us happiest?

Is there any person in the world, or any cause, that, if the circumstances called for it, we would be willing to die for?

If this were the last day of our lives, what would we do with it?

To hear ourselves try to answer questions like these is to begin to hear something not only of who we are, it is also to begin to hear something of what we are becoming and what we are failing to become.

As always, these radical questions are posed in the embrace of God's love, where there is no fear, but only grace. Which leads me to conclude with the Other Serenity Prayer:

God grant me the serenity to stop beating myself up for not doing things perfectly, the courage to forgive myself because I am working on doing better, and the wisdom to know that you already love me just the way I am. AMEN.

Peace!

Vincent



SIXTH
presbyterian
CHURCH

March Worship and Preaching

March 3 – Luke 9:28-36, "Cloud of Unknowing"

March 10 – Rev. Susan Rothenberg preaching

March 17 – Psalm 27:1-6, "Is God Beautiful?"

March 24 – Luke 13:1-9, "The Hurt That Leads to Life"

March 31 – Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32, "The Problem with Being Good"

What the Pastor Is Reading

Irish Presbyterians and the Shaping of Western Pennsylvania, Peter Gilmore

Dopesick: Dealers, Doctors, and the Drug Company that Addicted America, Beth Macy

Youth Group Happenings, March

Sunday School—Sunday school class for junior and senior high will be held each week (10 - 10:45 am) upstairs in Jenny Newman's new office. Join Amy Whipple and Katrina Kennel for discussion on the week's scripture passages, current events, and other assorted topics.

Youth Fellowship at Crazy Mocha—Youth are invited for coffee and conversation at Crazy Mocha on Murray Ave. from 6 to 7:30 pm on Thursdays, March 7, 14, and 21.

Youth Fellowship Movie and Games—Youth are invited for fellowship, food, games and a movie on Friday, March 29 from 6:30 to 10 pm. Please let Jenny know if you will be attending.

Questions? Contact **Jenny Newman** at (412) 720-6392 or Jenny@Sixthchurch.org

Ukulele Club

Ukulele Club for children and youth who want to learn. We will meet twice a month before Sunday school from 9:15 to 9:45 am. Kids in Kindergarten and up are welcome to participate!



We have some classroom instruments for those who are interested in trying it out or feel free to bring your own!

Upcoming dates: March 10, 24



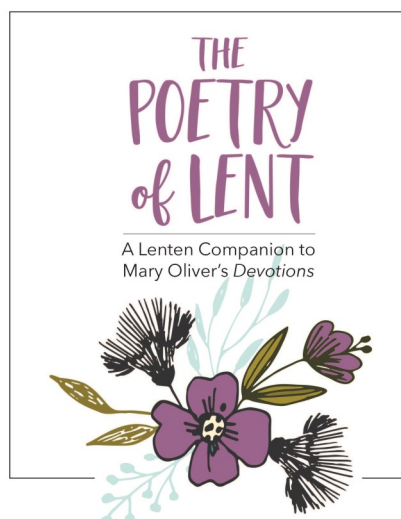
Adult Education Opportunities: Spring/Lent

Grace and Trauma, March 3 and 17

Our own Rev. Betty Voight, and licensed therapist Debra Flint, both Gestalt Pastoral Care Ministers, will lead us in an informational and experiential practice for inner healing work to help any and all of us coming with the reality of personal and societal trauma. The brief introduction will offer an invitation to go deeper at a planned late May retreat in New Castle.

Poetry of Lent, March 24, 31, April 7, 14

Amy Whipple and Pastor Vincent will lead and discuss *The Poetry of Lent: A Lenten Companion to Mary Oliver's Devotions*. This devotional that features passages of scripture and meditations on key Lenten themes centered around poems from Mary Oliver's collection, *Devotions*. We will have copies of this devotional along with the selected poems available.



MARY
OLIVER



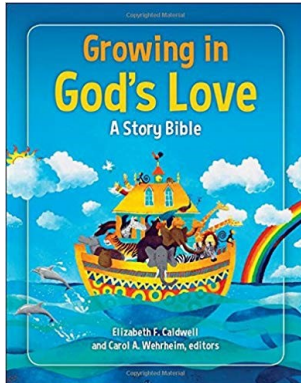
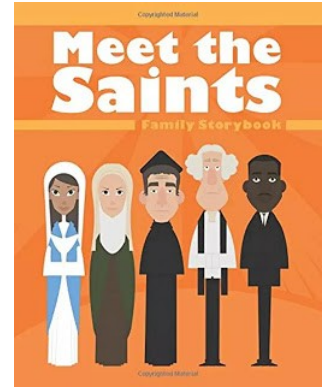
Devotions

The Selected Poems of Mary Oliver

Lent Reading Recommendations

For children and families, the 40 days of lent are a great time to grab a book and spend a few minutes each day or week celebrating Lent by reading together. Here are two books that would be great:

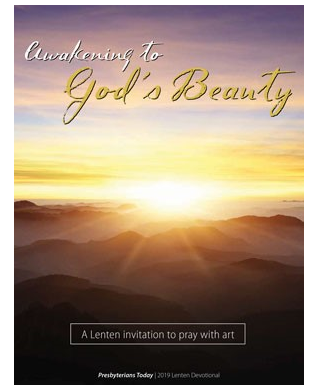
Meet the Saints: Family Storybook by Lindsay Hardin Freeman is great for all ages. It contains twenty-four stories of saint for families to read together. The stories feature short profiles on monks, missionaries, prophets, doctors, evangelists, and more. Settle in together once or twice a week during lent and start from the beginning - or pick the the stories that peak your interest. We have copies of this book at the church if you would like to preview it or borrow.



Growing in God's Love: A Story Bible by Elizabeth F. Caldwell and Carol A. Wehrheim is great for younger kids (ages 4-8 seems to be the target) and has 150 Bible stories divided into themes. I would recommend picking a story to read everyday from the sections about Jesus' life and teachings. At the end of each story there are three simple reflection questions - Hear, See, and Act that will prompt conversation about the story. Take a trip through the table of contents of this story bible and pick what you like. Themes include Strong Men and Women, Listening for God, Parables, and Healings and Miracles. I have a copy of this one at the church if you would like to preview it! (Wehrheim is also author, editor of the Sunday school curriculum that we use at Sixth Church called "Feasting on the Word.")

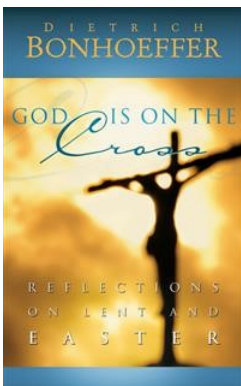
FOR ADULTS:

Presbyterian Today's 2019 Lent Devotional is called **Awakening to God's Beauty: A Lenten Invitation to pray with art**. The text, meditations and original photography are the work of the Rev. Krin Van Tatenhove, long-time Presbyterian pastor, hospice chaplain, substance abuse counselor, traveler, photographer, and storyteller. The devotional contains a variety of original photograph with a short short guided meditation for each day during Lent. We will have a limited amount of copies available at the church. You can also order it here



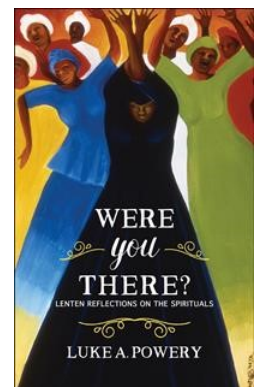
The Poetry of Lent: A Lenten Companion to Mary Oliver's "Devotions" is a weekly devotional created by the SALT Project. This is a down loadable six-week devotional that features passages of scripture and meditations on key Lenten themes centered around poems from Mary Oliver's collection, Devotions. We will have copies of this devotional along with the selected poems available in the church office.

God is on the Cross: Reflections on Lent and Easter by Dietrich Bonhoeffer has



forty-seven devotions that move move thematically through the weeks of Lent and Easter, with themes of prayerful reflection, self-denial, temptation, suffering, and the meaning of the cross. Passages are taken from Bonhoeffer's letters and sermons.

Where You There? Lenten Reflections on the Spirituals by Luke A. Powery uses African American spirituals as the basis of the devotions to take you th rough Lent. Each selection includes the lyrics of the spiritual, a reflection by the author on the spiritual's meaning, a Scripture verse related to that meaning, and a brief prayer.



Lent for Everyone: Luke, Year C by N.T. Wright guides you from Ash Wednesday to the week after Easter.

Sixth Church and God's Creation

Help End Food Waste



Forty percent of all food in the U.S. is wasted. Food waste is the number-one item in landfills. Whether these facts surprise you or not, it's hard not to feel some collective sense of failure when we think about how many people in this country, and on this earth, go hungry.

To make matters worse, wasted food is a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. While there are a plethora of ways that changing your diet can reduce your carbon footprint, not wasting food is one of the most significant ways, no matter what you eat.

A lot of food waste happens during the processing, harvesting, and storing phases that take place before the food even hits your plate. Produce can go bad before it's shipped; inefficient farming can damage products; and so many fruits and veggies are discarded for being too "ugly" or misshapen to sell.

Once this food gets to the landfill, it produces methane as it rots and breaks down amid heaps of food and other trash. (Methane is an even more damaging greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide.) Agriculture accounts for some 70 percent of water use worldwide, so food waste is also a great waste of freshwater and groundwater.

So what can we do? The giant industries and food corporations that control so much of what we eat can almost certainly improve their efficiency. Distributing food to prevent oversupply would be a great step. But as consumers, there's a lot we can do right in the kitchen and at the kitchen table.



Planning meals goes a long way. Don't grocery shop recklessly. Think about how many meals each item will provide and how long those items can be stored. Today's baked chicken can become tomorrow's chicken salad. Store food correctly, especially produce, so that it will last as long as possible. And who isn't guilty of forgetting what's even in the fridge? Check it frequently. Before going to the grocery store or farmers market, survey what you still have in the pantry and fridge in order to shop efficiently.

Wasted food wastes labor, time, resources, money, and environmental efforts. Consumers waste more food than grocery stores and restaurants combined. Don't be part of that cause.

— Keith Gillogly

Sixth Cleaning Kit Drive

“Create in me a clean heart, oh God” —oh and, by the way, a clean house is great to have, too.

Cleaning supplies are expensive, however. If one had to choose between that and food, we know what the choice will be.

Since Lent is a time for reflection and a sort of spring cleaning of the soul it seems appropriate to donate cleaning supplies to our less privileged neighbors. As board members of the Wilkinsburg Community Ministry Board (WCM), Jane Fox and I have offered to collect cleaning kits for the community. The supplies should not be large as people move quite frequently and leave this type of item behind. Ruth Kittner, Executive Director of WCM, has provided us with a list of preferred items.

Please do not feel required to buy all items, rather donate what you can.

A collection box will be at the front of the sanctuary beginning March 10th through April 7th.

Requested items include:

- Laundry detergent (up to 48 ounces)
- Dish soap (Dawn is best because it can be used on other things)
- Windex in spray bottles
- Toilet bowl cleaner
- Tile/kitchen cleaner (like 409 or something similar)
- Something to help with Dusting
- Wood Floor/lino cleaner
- Sponges
- Bucket
- Mop

—Jane Opgaard



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**



Notes from February Session Meeting

CLERK'S REPORT

- Worship 1/27:111; 2/3:125; 2/10:140; 2/17:126; 2/24: 122.
 - ⇒ **Motion** to approve the Ordination Service of Worship for Ben Rumbaugh to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament on Saturday March 16 at 2pm was passed unanimously.
 - ⇒ **Motion** to approve Jan Myers-Newbury and Leslie Kaplan as elder commissioners to the February 21 Presbytery meeting was passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

FINANCE: January Financials (Mary Radcliffe)

- Discussion around the treasurer report's new look since using the new software for in-house accounting. Changes with how to read the new format were discussed, some suggestions were made by committee members.
- Quarterly committee-specific detailed reports will be coming.
 - ⇒ **Motion** to open a new money market account specifically for the collected capital campaign funds (currently ~\$222,078.22) was passed unanimously.
 - ⇒ **Motion** to approve the Capital Campaign Mission allocation of 5% to the designated beneficiaries on April 1 each year (the 5% will be based upon the receipt of capital campaign contributions from the previous calendar year), was passed unanimously.

HOUSE: Capital Projects Team (Kaplan)

- Greg Winner has volunteered to lead the handicapped renovations for the upstairs bathroom.
- A subcommittee consisting of House Chair Leslie Kaplan, Gregory Winner, and Peter Koehler has been formed to pursue future renovation bids and recommendations.
 - **Motion** to approve the bid for concrete work by DiBucci and Sons for \$25,255 dated 1/24/19 (page 14 in session packet) was passed unanimously.
 - **Motion** to approve the Toshiba Copier Contract (pages 15-19 in session packet), as long as the machine specified is confirmed to be new, was passed unanimously.

PERSONNEL:

- ⇒ **Motion** to approve Pastor's study leave for Retreat at the Abbey of the Genesee April 29-May 5...no objections, it's so ordered.
- ⇒ **Motion** to approved the Pastor and Sixth Presbyterian Church to enroll in the Healthy Pastors, Healthy Congregations program of the Board of Pensions...no objections, it's so ordered.

LEADERSHIP HANDOFF

2019 Goal suggestions included:

- Transitioning Bookkeeping
- Capacity management, having the staff and volunteer leadership to do what we are doing
- Prioritize/implement Capital projects
- Implement and update public safety protocols
- Clarify Mission Values.

- ⇒ **Motion** to amend the 2019 Administrative Manual House committee chair section, wording should read: “The house chair will obtain bids from at least 2 entities for any repair, renovation, or maintenance projects in excess of \$5000, and the house chair will obtain the Session’s approval for any expenditure of over \$2,500, other than usual utility bills.” Passed unanimously.

DEACON’S REPORT (meeting 2/20/19)

- Minutes reviewed. It was noted Deacons’ discussion around potential ways to spend some surplus funds, such as providing support for new and/or young families in the congregation lacking local support, and community building events/dinners.

REPORT FROM PRESBYTERY The written report was reviewed.

OLD BUSINESS (Jan Myers-Newbury)

- The revised coffee hour committee chair responsibilities document was reviewed, minor changes suggested. No changes made to monthly committee assignments.

NEW BUSINESS

- ⇒ **Motion** to approve “Create in Me a Clean House, O God” Wilkinsburg Community Ministry Cleaning Drive, no objections, it’s so ordered.

COMMITTEE INFORMATION

Worship:

- ⇒ **Motion** to approve 2019 Communion Dates as listed on page 33 of session meeting packet, carries with one objection around the Christmas Eve service including communion.
- ⇒ **Motion** to approve Rev. Susan Rothenberg, guest preacher, Sunday, March 10. No objections, so ordered.

Adult Christian Education:

- ⇒ **Motion** to approve “The Poetry of Lent: A Lenten Companion to Mary Oliver’s Devotions” led by Amy Whipple at 10am Sundays March 24, 31 April 7, 14, 21. No objections, so ordered.

Church & Community:

- ⇒ **Motion** to approve Rev. Matthew Fricker to present on Presbyterian Peacemaking in Iraq on Wed May 8, passed unanimously.
- ⇒ **Motion** to approve PCUSA denomination offerings as listed on page 39 of session meeting packet (One Great Hour of Sharing 4/21, Peace and Global Witness 6/16, CROP Walk 10/13, Christmas Joy 12/22 and 12/24), passed unanimously.

PIIN Justice Core Team:

- Noted that an action to establish a County wide independent police review board is in the planning stages, in the aftermath of last year’s Antwon Rose shooting.

NEXT MEETING: March 27, 2019, 7:30 pm

Capital Projects Update

Spring is coming, and so are a few projects for the Capital Campaign. Session has approved the concrete proposal, and DiBucci and Sons will begin the outdoor concrete work when the weather moderates. This work includes replacing sections of the wall along Forbes and Murray and the bottom right quadrant of the concrete steps from Forbes Avenue which have cracked and sunk. In addition, the decaying stepping stone patio around the side entrance will be replaced with concrete and the steps to the door patched. This new concrete patio will be safer for pedestrians, and will help prevent infiltration of water into the building.

Contributors were promised that 5% of their contributions would be given to mission. In 2018, the church received \$222,078.22 in contributions to the Capital Campaign. Session voted to make an annual distribution to the mission projects in April of each year based on the contributions of the previous year. The mission projects/organizations that are to be funded include More Light, the Clean Air Council for earth care, Wilkesburg Community Ministry for charity, and Pittsburgh United for social justice.

Further projects we hope to get underway soon include kitchen renovations, repairs in the Ridinger Room, the second floor bathroom accessibility improvements, and handicap ramp repair, and the first set of sanctuary windows.

If you have questions about the capital campaign and the projects, please call or email Leslie Kaplan at bezbeads@verizon.net, or Lauren Ward at wardle47@gmail.com.

There's no reason to have this picture of Candice Bergen and Gilda Radner except that I needed something to fill the space, and I love Candice Bergen and Gilda Radner in general and this sketch in particular. You're welcome.



Family Overnight Retreat 2019



May 18-19



Sixth families are invited for a time of fun and fellowship at Camp Crestfield. Plan to arrive at Camp Crestfield at 10 am 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 14.**

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

Retreat Registration

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

Amount Paid _____

Contact Information (Phone, email)

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

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!

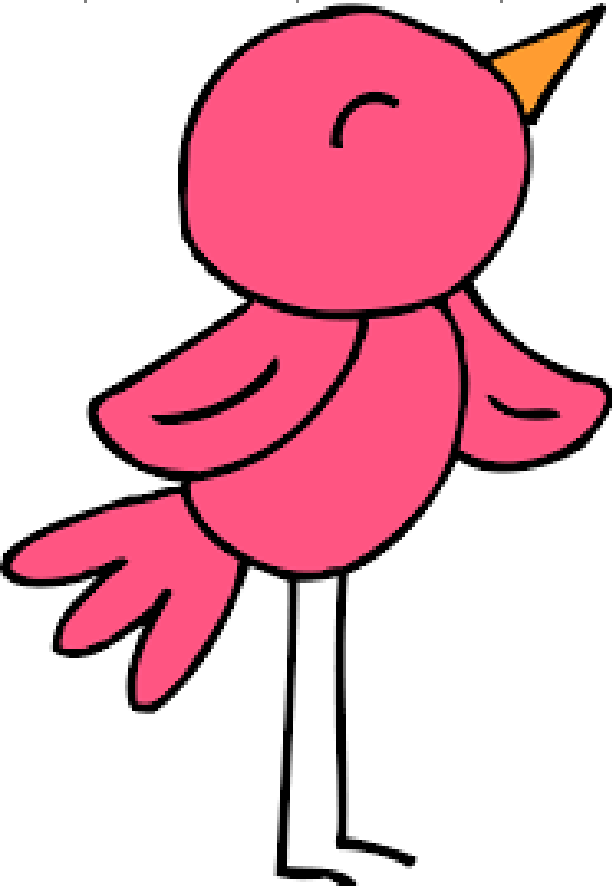
We have financial help available if needed. Contact Jenny Newman for more info.

March 2019 – Events and Birthdays

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 9:00 am, House Committee 7:00 pm, NA
3 10:00 am, Sunday School 10:00 am, Trauma and Grace 11:00 am, Worship 12:15 pm, Church & Community 12:15 pm, More Light 8:00 pm, NA	4 Pam Howe Katie Kaplan 7:00 pm, NA	5 5:00 pm, Pancakes!	6 10:30 am, Bible Study	7 6:00 pm, Youth Group (Crazy Mocha) 7:30 pm, Choir	8 Jordan Lowe Greg Nestor	9 Linda Davoli 7:00 pm, NA
10 9:15 am, Ukulele Club 10:00 am, Sunday School 11:00 am, Worship 8:00 pm, NA	11 7:00 pm, NA	12	13 Joseph DeLucia 10:30 am, Bible Study 7:00 pm, 14th Ward	14 6:00 pm, Youth Group (Crazy Mocha) 7:30 pm, Choir	15	16 7:00 pm, NA



March 2019 – Events and Birthdays

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
17 Wilson Juring Glenda Rosenberry Rohan Vaux 10:00 am, Sunday School 10:00 am, Trauma and Grace 11:00 am, Worship 8:00 pm, NA	18 7:00 pm, NA	19	20 10:30 am, Bible Study 7:00 pm, Deacons	21 Winter Cornelius-Bates 6:00 pm, Youth Group (Crazy Mocha) 7:30 pm, Choir	22	23 7:00 pm, NA
24 9:15 am, Ukulele Club 10:00 am, Sunday School 10:00 am, Adult Lenten Study 11:00 am, Worship 12:00 pm, Church & Community 8:00 pm, NA	25 Emma Cooper 7:00 pm, NA	26 Malakai Whipple	27 10:30 am, Bible Study 7:30 pm, Session	28 7:30 pm, Choir	29 6:30 pm, Youth Movie and Game Night	30 9:00 am, House Committee 12:30 pm, Fiberarts Guild 7:00 pm, NA
31 Jeffery Kaplan 10:00 am, Sunday School 10:00 am, Adult Lenten Study 11:00 am, Worship 8:00 pm, NA						

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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.

Food for Thought...



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!

“They preferred writing about great men to writing about great hills; but they sat on the great hills to write it....They blazoned the shields of their paladins with the purple and gold of many heraldic sunsets. The greenness of a thousand green leaves clustered into the live green figure of Robin Hood. The blueness of a score of forgotten blue skies became the blue robes of the Virgin. The inspiration went in like sunbeams and came out like Apollo.” —G. K. Chesterton

“Do you see now why I believe in miracles? I used to imagine time folding over, the shades of our future selves slipping back to the crucial moments to tap each of us on the shoulder and whisper: Look, there, look! That man, that woman: they’re for you; that’s your life, your future, fidgeting in the line, dripping on the carpet, shuffling in that doorway. Don’t miss it.” —Tana French

“What is the meaning of life? That was all — a simple question; one that tended to close in on one with years, the great revelation had never come. The great revelation perhaps never did come. Instead, there were little daily miracles, illuminations, matches struck unexpectedly in the dark; here was one.” —Virginia Woolf