

> **Rev. Dr. Vincent Kolb**

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MAKE SACRIFICES

People of faith who believe in a loving God certainly play a big role in building “a community of we.” We need to be kind, good neighbors to others, and try to influence life to be fair and just for all citizens, not just a few.

I moved here from Jacksonville, Fla., just three years ago, but I like the spirit I see in the Pittsburgh faith community and beyond. I see Pittsburgh as one of many cities that is finding creative ways to bridge the divide and work toward common goals. This area shows a deep sense of community pride. People are proud to be from Pittsburgh—and people who have left make every effort to come back. We hope that through things like good schools, safe streets and attractive waterways, our children can both succeed here and stay here.

Paradoxically, some of the challenges the region faces compel people to think in terms of “we.” Take the federal mandate to rebuild the sewer system, a project resulting in higher sewer bills. No one enjoys rate hikes, but it gives Pittsburghers a sense of ownership. If we’re having to pay for this out of our own pocket, we’re going to want some of these community benefits in place. That contributes to “a community of we,” because people make sacrifices to invest in the community’s benefit.

At the Pennsylvania Interfaith Impact Network, we work to address issues such as sewer and water rate hikes, to fight for an increased minimum wage, and to fight against racism. We have been engaged in efforts across our city to improve relationships between the police and the community of color. We are helping the new school superintendent launch community schools that will provide wrap-around services for communities facing unique challenges. We try to do our part to support and build a fairer community for everyone.

— Interviewed by Kellie Gormly

