

## Dear Third Family,

In one of my favorite movies, "Shawshank Redemption," there is a character named Brooks. He has spent most of his adult life in prison, and after many decades of confinement, he is finally approved for release. In a scene toward the end of the movie, he exits the prison gates, suitcase in hand, walking out as a free man into a world he hardly knows anymore. Everything has changed. The world has passed him by. He finds that he does not know how to live as a free man without the constraining rhythms of prison life, and he increasingly feels useless and destabilized. Finally, after a few disorienting weeks, he takes his own life.

Brooks was freed from prison, but he did not know what he was freed for. He was released from captivity, but he had no purpose and direction for his new existence. Freedom needs a purpose.

This Fall, we'll be studying and reflecting together on the book of Exodus. On the one hand, the book of Exodus is an amazing story about God freeing his people from horrible suffering and captivity in Egypt. But much more than what they are freed from, the book of Exodus is about what God has freed his people for. He frees them not so they can wander about aimlessly, but so they can fulfill the purpose he has given them to be his missionary people in the world. In Exodus 19, perhaps the climax of the book, God tells them, "You will be my treasured possession among all people...you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (19:5-6). They are freed for a purpose!

Many of us know we are free in Christ. We are set free from sin and death and judgment by his grace, thanks be to God! But what are you free for? What are we together as a community freed for? What are called to be and do? The church is not a receptacle for saved people to sit around and enjoy their redeemed status—the church is God's purposeful community that is given a holy calling from God in the world. Using the book of Exodus, we will be looking at how God is preparing us as his people for his holy purpose.

(continued on page 2)

**THIRD—**  
*training disciples to  
love and transform  
the world through  
Jesus Christ.*

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Rev. Ed Satterfield  
Associate Pastor for  
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Rev. Richard Haney  
Parish Associate

Rev. Nan Clarke  
Parish Associate for  
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This comes at a good time for us as a community. The staff and strategic planning team of Session, along with the help of the TAG group that facilitated numerous focus groups in the Spring, are entering into a season of vision and strategic planning for our congregation. We are asking God what he wants for us in the next few years and how we can be faithful to the call he has on our congregation. We want our plans to be guided not by our own ingenuity but by the Word of God and the Spirit of God. Will you pray that God will guide us as we pray and discern together, and that God would use the book of Exodus to reveal more of his will to all of us?

Thanks be to God, we are not just free from sin and death, we are also freed for life, purpose and hope. God is preparing us for his holy calling.

Grace and peace in Christ Jesus+

Corey

### **Fall Sermon Series – EXODUS: Preparing a People**

9/13. A Suffering People. Exodus 1: 8-22

9/20. A Called People. Exodus 3:1-15

9/27. A Rescued People. Exodus 14:11-31

10/4. A Covenant People. Exodus 19:1-9

10/11. An Obedient People. Exodus 20:1-21

10/18. A Just People. Exodus 22:16-23:9

10/25. A Supplied People. Exodus 16:2-5, 13-21

11/1. A Generous People. Exodus 25:2, 35:4-9, 20-29

11/8. A Repentant People. Exodus 32:1-20

11/15. A Praying People. Exodus 33:12-34:8

11/22. A People With God. Exodus 40:20-37

#### Reflection Guides:

We have Sermon Reflection Guides posted to Third's website every Sunday afternoon. This guide will have questions that you or your small group can use to discuss the sermon and its points of application in your lives. We encourage your small group to consider using these reflection guides during the fall as your small group study.



Save the date! Spread the word! Third is hosting a neighborhood block party on Sunday September 6 at 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on our church grounds. Food trucks, bounceables, a petting zoo, live music and more will be featured. Please join us in seeing mission opportunities literally in our own backyard and enjoy engaging with our community. Help us invite folks and families in surrounding neighborhoods. Information on our upcoming Fall season at Third will be available, too. Come one, come all!



On Saturday, September 12, Third Church is joining Trinity United Methodist and River Road Baptist in sponsoring the Mission Footprint 5K and Kids' Fun Run. All proceeds from the race go to support Camp Alkulana, CARITAS, CrossOver Ministry and the Micah Initiative. Register on our website.

## NEWCOMERS: Exploring Covenant Partnership

Interested in learning more about Third or would you like to consider membership? Join us in our next Newcomers Class where you will learn about Third's vision for worship, discipleship, community, serving and outreach.

Sign up online at [www.thirdrva.org/membership](http://www.thirdrva.org/membership) or contact Beth Nichols at [bethn@thirdrva.org](mailto:bethn@thirdrva.org) or 804-282-4645 ext. 124. Childcare is provided with a reservation for the class.

### OUR NEXT NEWCOMERS CLASS:

Sunday morning, October 11 from 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.  
 Friday evening, October 16 from 6-9 p.m. with dinner  
 Saturday, October 17 from 9-3 p.m. with lunch  
 Sunday, October 18 at 11:15 a.m. (Joining Service for new members)

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## READY OR NOT – A Personal Reflection on the Haiti Mission Trip

“Are you ready?” I was asked this question repeatedly prior to my trip to Haiti on July 11.

“Ready or not, here I come,” I replied with trepidation.

The 4 a.m. alarm pierced the quiet. My sons and my husband, each nestled in his own king-sized bed, slumbered a bit longer as I bid farewell to my beloved dogs, Chester and Murphy. They too nested in plush comfort.

Pet sitter: done.

Bug spray, 50% DEET: packed.

Battery-powered fan: packed.

After one last savor of Diet Coke, I boarded our shiny SUV with Mike, my husband, Michael, our 24-year-old son and James, our 16-year-old son; we left our quaint cul-de-sac and headed down the paved road to Third Church. Teeth brushed, hair shampooed, clothes clean, suitcases sturdy, wheeled and properly ID’ed, we loaded the luxury bus that would deliver us directly to our gate of departure.

**I worried that we might have forgotten something...But, upon our arrival in Haiti, I realized that anything I might have forgotten was something that the Haitian people had never, EVER had or NEEDED.**

We were greeted by rhythmic maracas, strumming guitars and joyful faces. Velvety complexions, pearly white teeth and warm, brown eyes revealed the nature of the Haitian hearts; they were a people rich in faith. Again, I thirsted for a Diet Coke (well aware that they were unavailable in Haiti); however, the pettiness of my deprivation quickly embarrassed me in light of our surroundings on the way to our guest quarters for the week:

Pothole-ridden, dusty roads.

Sweltering, relentless heat.

Repugnant smells of urine and garbage.

Naked, bloated-bellied children sporting shredded Nikes.

Emaciated dogs and bleating goats grazing on trash and excrement.

Petite women and girls bearing weighty loads atop their heads.

Sweat-drenched men rebuilding homes for precious loved ones.



I believe that in God’s kingdom, we are fit together and called to live in community; together we are being built into something with great potential. As a Christian, I believe that God expects me to reflect His character and His moral standard through my interaction with and love for other people. This belief drew me to Haiti with my family from July 11 to 18; at home, it has drawn me to work with refugee families in our local community.

Our team of forty served in three groups:

1) My group taught Vacation Bible School in Menelas from 9 to 12, Monday through Friday, to approximately 140 children, ages 5 to 12. Each teacher had a Haitian translator working alongside him/her. In the afternoon, we nurtured orphans with special needs at Gertrude’s Orphanage.

2) A construction team built a house for a church member alongside Haitian workers; the future homeowner helped as well.

3) A medical team served patients at a clinic in Cite Soleil.

Though I primarily served as a VBS teacher, I spent an afternoon with my son, James, and the construction crew and learned about the medical clinic from my son, Michael, and husband, Mike, who served as an ophthalmic technician and physician, respectively.

Reflections on VBS and Gertrude’s Orphanage: The children were filled with joy. The younger ones couldn’t resist hugging us while some of the older ones, just like American preteens, rolled their eyes as if they indeed were too old to participate in VBS. I was astounded by their profuse appreciation of our gifts—sunglasses and baseball caps from the Dollar Store—and I marveled at their attentiveness during the teaching of the Bible story. Though plagued by a life of difficult circumstances, these children seemed free, in want of nothing—their hope lay securely in the promises of God.

Each afternoon, I prayed quietly for the Holy Spirit to provide me with patience and strength so I could tend to the children at Gertrude’s Orphanage. Honestly, I found it physically and emotionally difficult to tend to their needs. However, the needs were so basic—a boy wanted to be snuggled; another child wanted to be freed from her wheelchair in order to sit beside me on the bench. **Alexandra clung to me each day and smiled. Her clubbed feet (the only disability that was apparent) would have been corrected years ago had she lived in America. It all seemed so unfair.** And, I almost applauded the girl with Down syndrome as she alternated hugs with bruising pinches to my arm. Though the pinches hurt, she was unleashing emotions that she could not verbalize and this seemed healthy for her to be able to do so. Truly, I left the orphanage each day exhausted and ready for the shower as my clothing was dampened by saliva or by urine, as the diapers that these precious babies wore were paper-thin.



Reflections on the construction team: Working in the hot sun, I spent one afternoon shaking a wooden-framed mesh sifter; a mixture (pebbles and coarse and fine sand) was shoveled onto the mesh. Once the coarser material was separated from the fine sand, it was discarded and the fine material was mixed with water and cement to make the concrete for the wall plaster. James obtained water from a man-made well; the water was used to bind the plaster for the house walls. The team worked tirelessly as did the Haitian workers. The neighborhood children gathered around; they particularly liked James and Steven who played games with them at the site.

Reflections on the medical team: Patients lined up outside the clinic each day, and, at the end of the day, many patients were unfortunately turned away. The team worked tirelessly in an effort to serve as many patients as possible. My husband and son spoke of treating near-sighted patients who had never had access to eyeglasses, dehydrated infants, and children with scabies and worms; they were even able to remove a large cyst from the throat of a young woman. Although the resources were limited, the medical workers provided relief and prayer for each patient.

Each evening, our groups retreated to the compound. **Upon entering the compound, we were often serenaded by joyful voices radiating from the church walls.** Showers never felt so good. Little nuisances like keeping our mouths shut while showering or carrying water bottles to the sink for brushing our teeth became so insignificant. I even spent ten minutes one day standing, covered with soap, in the shower stall waiting for someone to turn the water back on.

We ate traditional Haitian dishes morning and night that were prepared by the wonderful staff of Haiti Outreach Ministries. We adjusted quickly to unreliable electricity and air conditioning; each night, just beside us, a family slumbered on their rooftop in order to escape the suffocating heat inside their home.

August 18, I said farewell to Roberson, my translator, my fellow man and lover of God. Oh, how he impacted my week with his passion for God, his passion for life and teaching children and his resilience in the face of such hardship. He is 31 years old, newly married, and studying law. He built his own house over several weekends.



**He asked me for just one thing: the Bible that I brought with me to Haiti.** I teared up as I wrote a note to him on the opening page. I gave it to him and his appreciation was unparalleled. If only I had realized this, I would have brought so many more Bibles with me to Haiti.

Once again, we boarded the luxury bus heading home.

Smooth, well-lit stretches of road.

Air-conditioned buses and cars.

Scents of summertime and flowers.

Children asleep inside their palatial homes.

Plump dogs and cats frolicking in manicured yards.

Families gathered at home or enjoying the night out.

My family drove home to our quiet cul-de-sac. I greeted my precious dogs, Chester and Murphy. I hugged my family and thanked God for His protection and for His many blessings.

A Closing Prayer: Thank you, Lord, for placing me in your family. Please show me how I can build trusting relationships in my community here in Richmond and all around the world, and show me how I might serve others and ease their burdens. Please give me a heart of love and compassion that reflects your love. Then, help me to take action. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

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- *Ellen Armstrong*



# THE FALL SEASON *at Third*



## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

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**Nursery for 8:45 a.m. and 11:15 a.m. Sunday services. Sunday School is at 10:00 a.m.**

Child care is available for all children aged Kindergarten and younger. First grade and above attend worship with their parents.

Children ages 2 through 6th grade are taught by teams of volunteers who use the Tru curriculum by David C. Cook. This curriculum empowers the family to be the primary spiritual teacher and includes a weekly parent page emailed to families. The parent page previews the following Sunday's lesson, has a memory verse and blessing for the family to use the week before the children will learn the lesson in Sunday school. Ministry essentials for this curriculum include the following:

- ~ Scripture as authority
- ~ God's ENTIRE story from Genesis to Revelation, lessons share the good news of redemption through Jesus
- ~ God is central

You can see all 7 ministry essentials at: [truministry.com/tru-philosophy/](http://truministry.com/tru-philosophy/)

If you would like to receive the weekly parent email, contact Tracie Meadows at [TracieM@ThirdRVA.org](mailto:TracieM@ThirdRVA.org) or Kathy White at [KathyW@ThirdRVA.org](mailto:KathyW@ThirdRVA.org) with your child's name and age or grade.

For all class locations and teachers, please visit our website or find the Fall Season booklet at the church kiosks.

## STUDENT MINISTRY (GRADES 7-12)

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**Sunday Mornings: 10:00-11:00 a.m.**

Middle School Girls (grades 7-8)

Middle School Boys (grades 7-8)

High School (grades 9-12, coed)

**Sunday Nights: 7:00-8:30 p.m.**

For all students in 7th-12th grades. Fellowship hall and basement.

7:00-7:25: game time

7:25-7:55: worship message

7:55-8:30: small group breakout

# ADULT DISCIPLESHIP & FELLOWSHIP CLASSES

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## **Sunday Mornings: 10:00-11:00 a.m. September 13 through December 27, 2015**

Third places a high value on community and learning together. We have a full slate of seven class offerings on Sunday morning, and by exploring our Connect Page you can find opportunities to engage with the scriptures and others on Sundays and throughout the week. Check out the full information on each of the classes in our Fall Season booklet at church kiosks, on our website, or contact Tom Barila at TomB@thirdrva.org.

**Young Adult Community** | Room 215

**“Sermon Chat”** | Hosted by Tom Barila | The “Vault” @ 500 Forest Avenue

**Marriage Fellowship** | Leaders: Keith and Connie Byers | Room 209

## **Addiction and Grace: Love and Spirituality in the Healing of Addictions**

Hosted by the Metamorphosis fellowship | 500 Forest Avenue, Room 109 | Facilitator: Mary Damon

**“Did not our hearts burn within us?” –A study on the book of Luke** | Room 213

**Faith Essentials** | Room 207

**A Study of Hebrews** | Led by Dave Carroll | Hosted by the Good News fellowship | Conference Room

**Where is God in the business and busyness of life?** | Hosted by the Fusion fellowship | Room 217

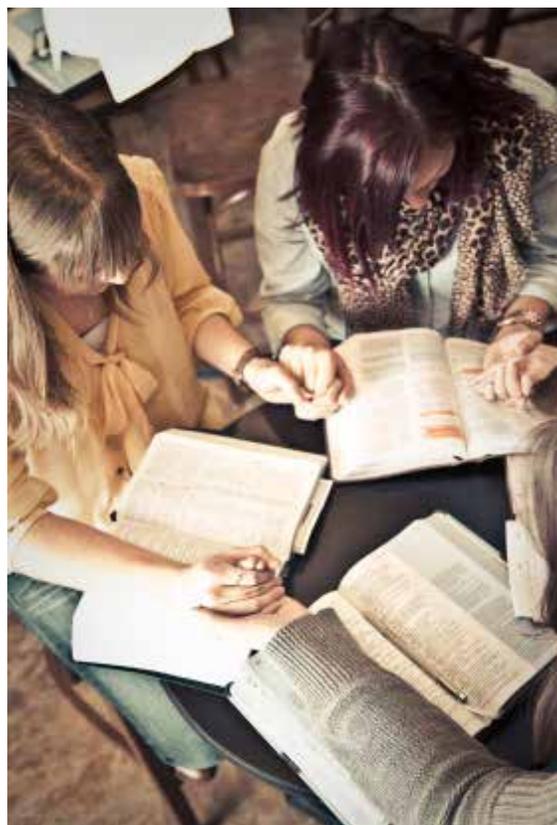
## SMALL GROUPS FALL 2015

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Small groups are formed for the purpose of community, discipleship and outreach. Most groups have 8-14 members and meet weekly, bimonthly or monthly in homes. The best time to form a small group is in the Fall.

**If you are interested in being part of a small group this fall, please email Beth Nichols at [bethn@thirdrva.org](mailto:bethn@thirdrva.org) with the following information: type of group (mixed, men, women) and your availability.**

We will seek to connect you with others who are interested in forming a small group and guide you in getting started.



# RECONNECT: WEDNESDAYS AT THIRD

**Come to Third on Wednesday evenings to serve, learn something new, or engage with each other around a table. We are excited to see our community-building puzzle grow! See how everything is fitting together below.**



## SERVING

### **Adult choir and worship team:**

7:00-8:30 p.m.

Location: Choir Room and Sanctuary

Contact: John White (johnw@thirdrva.org)

or Kim Taulbee (KimT@thirdrva.org)

### **Tutoring for Arabic children:**

6:30-7:30 p.m.

September 16 - November 18 (10 weeks)

Location: Student Ministry area

Contact: Andi Redmond (andi.redmond6@gmail.com)

Join this team to provide academic help and boost the confidence of students. We need 25 volunteers to commit weekly to help 25-50 students with school work for 10 weeks.

### **English as a Second Language (ESL) for adults:**

6:30-7:30 p.m.

September 16-November 18 (10 weeks)

Location: Room 101

Contact: Don Smith (owlorchardva@gmail.com)

### **Conversation partners for those learning English:**

6:30-7:30 p.m.

September 16-November 18 (10 weeks)

Location: Various classrooms

Contact: Elaine Metcalf (elainelohnemetcalf@gmail.com)

## STUDYING - ADULTS

### **Refresh**

Time: 6:30-8:00 p.m.

Location: Parlor/Room 101

Join young working women and/or young mothers for Bible study and for getting to know others in the same stage of life. No/low homework, lots of laughter and deepening friendships are all a part of Refresh! Time: Meets every other Wednesday, starting September 16. Contact: Caroline Hutton (cmhutton6@gmail.com)

### **A Guided Tour of the Bible**

Time: 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Location: Room 217

A Guided Tour of the Bible, led by Pastor Ed Satterfield, walks you through each book of the Bible in short sections. The study will help you understand and be impacted by the message of each book with time for exploring questions you have as you read. The Tour can be joined at any time over two five-week segments. September 16 – October 14: The Letters of Paul (Romans – Philemon). October 21 – November 18: The Non-Pauline Letters (Hebrews, James, Peter, John, Jude). Email Sterling Lloyd to register so we can prepare your materials.

## STUDYING - KIDS

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### Nursery

Time: 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Location: Room 109

Available in a godly, loving atmosphere for infants through young twos.

Contact: Kathy White (kathyw@thirdrva.org)

### Play and Worship

Time: 6:30-7:15 p.m. – Instructional time; 7:15-8:30 p.m. – play

Location: Room 103

Bible stories, music, crafts and playtime for older twos through Kindergarten.

Contact: Kathy White (kathyw@thirdrva.org)

### Kids' Jam

Time: 6:30-7:30 (child care available until 8:30)

Location: Room 201

For 1st-4th graders, Kid's Jam is designed to teach basic biblical knowledge and expose kids to missions while giving them time to form special friendships. In an energetic, VBS-type format, they will learn Psalm 23 and key verses in Romans this year, along with some select hymns of the faith. Children will also gain understanding of missions through stories from around the world. Kid's Jam will meet for September and the beginning of October, then will transition to practicing for our Christmas pageant.

Contact: Lynn Hardwicke (lynnh@thirdrva.org).

### Club 56

Time: 6:30-7:30

Location: Basement

5th & 6th graders growing in faith and having fun!

Contact: Rick Hutton (rickh@thirdrva.org)

## SOCIALIZING

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Have a desire to reconnect between Sundays in a casual way?

Start a book club, have coffee and conversation in the Fellowship Hall, meet with your small group at Third on Wednesdays...If you see a missing part of this puzzle and have an idea for a gathering centered around missions, learning, or relationships, we want to hear from you.

Contact Tom Barila at tomb@thirdrva.org or Lynn Hardwicke at lynn@thirdrva.org. We want to help you shape your interest and passion, then launch it!

In lieu of weekly dinners, we will have periodic **all-church dinners** during the course of the year. Look for more information on this to come. Tables will be set up in the Fellowship Hall if you would like to pick up dinner and eat with others...coffee, water and lemonade will be available.



# WOMEN'S MINISTRY

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The Women's Ministry is delighted to welcome two new women to our Leadership Team this fall:

Connie Byers



Nan Clarke



These two women love God, love Scripture, and love caring for and serving the women of Third. They bring their gifts of teaching, shepherding, and creativity to our ministry team and we are excited to welcome them.

## WOMEN'S GROUPS

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Third has many open women's groups that meet at Third during the school year. **The kickoff for many of these groups is Tuesday, September 8, 2015.** See details about these groups and contact information on the website at [www.thirdrva.org/womens-groups](http://www.thirdrva.org/womens-groups).

### Weekly and Bi-Weekly Studies

Mothers Together – Tuesday, 9:30-11:30 a.m., Fellowship Hall

Priscilla Shirer's "The Armor of God" – Tuesday, 9:15-11:00 a.m., Rm 213

Refresh Evening Study – Every other Wednesday, 6:30-8:00 p.m. starting Sept. 16, Parlor

Day by Day with God – 1st & 3rd Fridays from 1:00-3:00 p.m., 500 Forest Avenue

### Monthly Studies

Sara's Circle – Meet Our Mission Partners – 2nd Tuesday, 10:00-12:00 p.m., Room 101

Beth Moore's "Breath, the Life of God in Us" – 2nd Tuesday, 9:00-11:30 a.m., Room 217

Gospel of Mark – 2nd Monday, 7:00-8:30 p.m., 500 Forest Avenue

Potluck Dinner & Devotions – 3rd Tuesday, 6:15-8:45 p.m., 500 Forest Avenue

### Service & Special Interest Groups

Helping Hands Service Group – 2nd Tuesday, 12:15-1:30 p.m.

Kingdom Knitters – 4th Tuesday, 9:00-11:00 a.m. and 3rd Monday, 7:00-9:00 p.m., Room 101

Care & Cards – 2nd Sunday at 12:30 p.m. in Room 209

Christian Book Group – 4th Tuesday in September, November, January, March, May & July from 12:00-1:30 p.m., 500 Forest Ave.

Fun, Food & Fellowship for Women 50+ and On Your Own – 3rd Friday from 6-8 p.m.

### Seasons of Life Small Groups for Women

Seasons of Life small groups are designed to develop intentional relationships with women in different seasons of life. In these relationships, women will encourage one another to grow in their faith and in their passion for Christ.

Groups meet once a month in homes and focus on authentic sharing, studying biblical truth, and prayer.

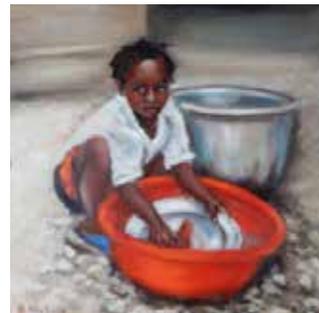
Seasons groups are forming now to begin in late September/early October and usually meet for the school year. If you are interested, contact Viqui Potter at [potters@comcast.net](mailto:potters@comcast.net) or 497-3244 by September 1, 2015.

## Fall Women's Conference

Mark your calendars for November 7, 2015 for our annual women's conference. This year we will have Sara Hagerty as our speaker. She has written the book *Every Bitter Thing is Sweet*.

## Gallery 500

Since moving into the 500 Forest office building, we have been displaying various artists' works in the front lobby. We have named this lobby "Gallery 500." If you are a Third artist and would like to have your art considered for display, please get in touch with Peggy Larmore at [pwlarmore@gmail.com](mailto:pwlarmore@gmail.com) or 387-1250. Currently on display is a series of oil paintings of Haitian children created by Beth Nichols.



## STUDENT MINISTRY UPCOMING EVENTS

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### September 13, 2015: "Hole-y" and Gutter Sunday

7-8:30 p.m.

Join us on kick-off Sunday for some fellowship and fun as we reconnect after the summer. Bring your appetite too for our annual Hole-y Sunday Celebration (middle school students enjoy Krispy Kreme donut ice cream sundaes) and Gutter Sunday (high school students enjoy scooping out ice cream sundaes from a 10' CLEAN gutter!).

### October 2-3, 2015: Confirmation Retreat

For all students in the 9th grade and above who wish to become members of the church. More details TBD.

### October 25, 2015: Annual Photo Scavenger Hunt Night

7-8:30 p.m.

Join your small group for an exciting night of crazy adventures throughout the church and rack up some points for your team. The more creative, the better! Bring friends!

### Save the Date:

July 3-9, 2016: High School Mission Trip–Mexico

July 25-30, 2016: Middle School Summer Retreat–The Great Escape

## EXPERIENCE ISRAEL TOUR – LAST CALL!

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**September 15 is the last chance to sign up for the Israel Tour.** The tour will take place next March 24-April 3, 2016. Join us for this beautiful opportunity to walk where Jesus walked. We will tour Israel, as well as Petra, Jordan. Contact Tom Barila ([TomB@thirdrva.org](mailto:TomB@thirdrva.org)) for more information.

**For more details on events, registrations and news, visit our website at [www.thirdrva.org/events](http://www.thirdrva.org/events).**

## CALLING ALL SINGERS

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Thanks be to God for the faithfulness and commitment of all of our choir members this summer. Each week they have participated in at least two of the three services, with many helping the whole morning! **If you have ever thought about singing in a choir and using your voice to worship and help others worship, then this is a great time to join.**

This can be done in two ways. We will rehearse each Wednesday evening from 7:00-8:30. You could participate in one or more services on Sunday morning. Another possibility is to join the choir for the special Christmas programs. This year the choirs will be singing in our annual Lessons and Carols on December 6. We will also be singing my favorite Christmas work, "Gloria," by John Rutter in the morning services on December 13.

Each week we will rehearse the Christmas music during the first part of the rehearsal. Those singing only for the Christmas music can then slip out. The remainder of rehearsal will be Sunday worship preparation. We have many new participants in choir so come and be a part of something very special. Please contact John White, [johnw@thirdrva.org](mailto:johnw@thirdrva.org). I look forward to hearing from you!

- John White, Director of Music Ministries



## WEDDING PLANNERS NEEDED!

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We need help planning the many weddings at Third!

If you are interested in helping us organize these special events, please contact Judy Hall for a rewarding opportunity:

(804) 282-4645 ext. 111  
[judyh@thirdrva.org](mailto:judyh@thirdrva.org)





“Not all who wander are lost.” This bumper-sticker sentiment captures the idea that our paths through the world are often round-about, rather than direct lines from point A to point B. This is true of our lives of faith, too, whether talking about our individual journeys with the Lord, or how whole church communities must always be depending on God to lead them into what’s next—their particular call to ministry in a particular time and place. The challenge of following God and being shaped by the (to us) unknown paths he takes us on will be a theme in worship this fall as we study the book of Exodus. But we’ll also explore that theme through the arts as we kickoff our Makers Series season on September 25 with an edition devoted to the idea of “sojourning.”

“Sojourn” is a word that captures the idea of wandering and travelling far from home, but also lingering and even resting in foreign lands. To sojourn is to willingly stay, engage, and invest in a place or community, even when we recognize that our presence there is temporary and we may always be strangers. Sojourning is related to the idea of “exile,” but carries more of a sense of being sent into that foreign land more than being sent out from a true home. **Exiles and sojourners both fervently seek for signposts on their journeys—for direction from the one who has laid out the road ahead.**

While the language of being spiritual travellers or “resident aliens” should strike a chord with all those who follow Jesus in our secularizing, post-Christian era, it is particularly appropriate when describing the lives and careers of many artists, perhaps especially those who are Christians. In this edition of the Makers Series, we’ll hear from three artists (including designer/photographer Ansel Olsen and singer/songwriter Rebekah White) who have followed roundabout paths to their current creative work. They have also sought to provide signposts for other travellers, too, even as they have discovered them for themselves. Watch for details at [www.thirdrva.org](http://www.thirdrva.org), and plan on joining us in the Fellowship Hall on Friday evening, September 25 from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. as we experience creativity, conversation, and community at the next Makers Series.

### **What is the Makers Series?**

The signature program of makeRVA (Third’s collaborative outreach to and through Richmond’s arts communities), each edition of the Makers Series brings together three “makers”—a writer, a visual artist, and a musician—to discuss their history and practice as artists and believers, touching on a unifying theme. In a coffee house setting with refreshments available throughout, each guest presents for 20 minutes, followed by a moderated conversation between the three and the audience, seeking to find commonalities between each maker’s experiences and to draw out insights about faith, culture, and creativity.

## *CARITAS – Helping homeless families*

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Every two weeks, our Deacon-led financial needs teams meet with people who are struggling to make ends meet. Last week, we met with a single mother working hard to take care of all her responsibilities. At her full-time job she cares for the elderly at a local nursing home. She comes home to care for her three children and her parents who are not in great health. She has no one to turn to for help. What she earns barely pays the bills each week. A car that failed is all it took to put her over the edge. She had to pay for the car to be able to go to work and got behind on her rent. Now she owes too much and was to be evicted from her home the next day.

This is the kind of person we will be hosting at CARITAS in October. Giving, hard-working, this mother has few options. This will be her second time being homeless and having to start over again.

CARITAS is the Greek word for “grace.” The ministry helps the homeless and Third will host families at Third for one week in October. Our part is one small piece of all that is provided as support for women and their families. CARITAS seeks to assist in a comprehensive way to help these families back into permanent housing and a stable life.

**Housing**– Caritas provides shelter through area churches providing shelter and meals. Last year 170 different churches provided for shelter and care of four different types of groups. Single men, single women, single parents with young children, and single parents with teens were housed and fed all over the city. Caritas works to coordinate these shelters in church settings and moves as quickly as possible to find each person permanent housing and a way to pay for it.

**Case workers**– The ministry has a staff of case managers who assist each person in getting into permanent housing as soon as possible–this is far cheaper than financing public shelters and actually seeks a remedy to homelessness. These social workers also provide job readiness training, internships, and job placement through the Caritas Works program so that individuals and families are able to quickly provide for themselves and get to a more stable place. Sixty percent of those eligible for work from their first three classes have secured long-term employment.

**Furniture bank**– Donated or built furniture yields the resource to provide families and individuals with “Home Starter” packages that furnish their new home with the needed essentials that truly make their place a home. These gifts help make their new life achievable when they are not faced with the choice of having to pay for rent or necessary furniture. This past year, 686 households received help with what they needed to make their home.

**Third’s week to host families will take place October 10-16. Plan to sign up on Sunday mornings at the CARITAS table to:**

- 1) help with meals,**
- 2) stay overnight with our guests,**
- or 3) take home clothes to do laundry.**



## SHARE TO CARE – Used Toy Drive

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Is your house overflowing with toys that your children have outgrown or grown tired of? Would you like to teach your children the joy of giving by sharing those toys with children who have none? Would you like to make a real difference in the life of a child this holiday season?

**It is not too soon to be thinking about putting a smile on the face of a child this Christmas. Last year, with the generous participation of Third Church, Care 2 Share Used Toy Drive was able to gift wrap and deliver a like-new used toy, book, and stuffed animal to over 400 children in the inner-city community.**

We are accepting donations now through November 30, for the 2015 holiday season. Once received, all donations will be gift wrapped and tagged according to age, then delivered before Christmas Day by Care 2 Share and ministries such as Friends of the Homeless, the Richmond City Police Department, and others who serve the inner-city children of Richmond.

Please consider helping this ministry in the following ways:

- Donate toys, books, and stuffed animals.
- Donate boxes, Christmas wrapping paper, tissue paper, wrapping tape, and AA batteries to help get the presents ready.
- Donate your time to sort, wrap, and tag gifts on volunteer days.

All donations must meet the following criteria:

- Each toy must be in a bag or box containing all its parts.
- Each toy must be clean and in good working order.
- Each toy must appear to be new – no scratches, dents, writing, etc.
- Books and stuffed animals must not have writing, chewed corners/ears, etc.

Donations may be dropped off at the following locations:

- The donation bins in the niche beside Room 109.
- The west end home of Third Church member, Carolyn Lilly.

Please call 564-7145 or email [carolynlilly@comcast.net](mailto:carolynlilly@comcast.net) to arrange a drop-off or pick-up date and time.



# RELATIONSHIPS IN PEACE – New Ministry Launch at Third

*Applying Biblical peacemaking principles to transform and strengthen personal relationships through teaching, coaching, and providing reconciliation services.*

## **Why was Relationships in Peace created by the Care Committee of Third's Session?**

Because of the gospel. Unless God had chosen to make peace with us through the blood of his Son, there would be no peace with others. The presence of Relationships in Peace helps our church live out that amazing truth, constantly pointing others to the hope of the gospel.

Because there are always relational issues present in the church, and people need help with them. Ever since the earliest days of the church, disagreements have been a constant. As Paul points out in Philippians 4:2-3, even the godliest people can find themselves involved in disagreements that they need help to work through. Paul didn't tell his friends to just work it out; he asked another dear friend in the church to help them work it out. Relationships in Peace will do the same—help our brothers and sisters when they need help.

Because people LEAK. Isn't teaching peacemaking enough? It doesn't take long for that knowledge to leak out and fade away. We forget what we've heard; and new members come who haven't heard it at all. Relationships in Peace will provide ongoing teaching about biblical peacemaking in relationships.

Because God seeks to transform lives. Relational peacemaking isn't just about knowing a bunch of tools and skills; it's a transformed way of life—people truly living out the gospel in their daily relationships. The wider role of Relationships in Peace is to help people be transformed by the reconciling power of Jesus Christ's death and resurrection.

Because God calls his children to serve their leaders and to advance their vision to build his church. Isn't attending to members' relationships the pastors' job? Every member of the body must play a role in order for the church to grow and be fully effective in ministry.

## **How can we specifically help you and your relationships?**

- 1) Attend training seminars and classes we offer. Learn to become a Peacemaker. We offer Biblical Peacemaking classes twice a year, as well as more advanced training to keep you constantly learning.
- 2) Ask a Peace Coach for help. Ever wish for someone who would walk with you through a difficult relationship, providing a listening ear, prayer support, wisdom from the Word, and practical helps? Peace Coaches are here to help you when you need it.
- 3) Consider Reconciliation Services. When you've reached an impasse trying to resolve an issue with a brother or sister in Christ, contact us for assistance.

### **TWO EXCITING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES!**

**October 23-24 & 30-31**  
**Biblical Peacemaking Course**  
**2 Friday nights, 7:00-9:30 p.m.**  
**& 2 Saturday mornings, 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

**February 19-20, 2016**  
**Conflict Coaching Seminar**  
**Both days 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.**  
**(Pre-seminar work required)**

No prior experience is required for either of these equipping seminars.  
For more information, contact: [RelationshipsInPeace.thirdrva@gmail.com](mailto:RelationshipsInPeace.thirdrva@gmail.com) or call  
Margie Satterfield (804)819-0260

# CEILING COLLAPSE: Remembering

This month marks the 15th anniversary of Third's ceiling collapse in the Sanctuary.



We are invited by the scriptures to remember the things God has done and to be in a posture of thankfulness! I hope this brief reflection encourages us to do so.

I can still vividly remember this night and God's sovereign protection. Here are a few of my memories!

- A decision. Our Christian Education team made a last-minute decision not to host a class in the Sanctuary. It was our opening night for the Fall season and we thought it would be best if we met in another room that night to help our parents and children get settled. In this class, we normally had 20 energetic "cherubs" learning and singing, led by our volunteer choir director, Susan Holt.
- Silence. Within minutes of the ceiling collapsing, I remember peering into the Sanctuary. There were smoke and dust everywhere and everything was leveled. **I anxiously called out to determine if anyone was in there. It was a piercing silence for a few minutes.** Standing next to me was Jimey Ames. We both believed that this silence was a sign that no one was in the Sanctuary rather than an indication of catastrophe.
- A new perspective. Later that evening after the EMS teams had left, I walked up to the communion table. The table was located under the cross in the front of the Sanctuary (see picture). The Bible was open and the first thing that captured my attention was the large subtitle "Saved by Grace." The Bible was open to Ephesians, chapter 2. The subtitle was capturing the core of Ephesians 2:8-10: **For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.**

This Fall, amidst the start-up of school, college football, and a heightened work schedule, I invite you to keep an attitude of thankfulness and to remember the things God has done.

## A GOOD PLACE TO CRY – *in praise of Third*

*I began working at Third as Communications Director this past February. A few weeks after, I found out I'd been accepted to Stanford University's MFA program in documentary filmmaking. I should have been overjoyed by this news. However, when I read my acceptance letter, I burst into tears– this would mean I would have to leave my new home community in Richmond.*

*Reflecting on this past sermon series, The Shape of Worship, I recall one of Corey's sermons when he talked about how, when we express praise for something, many of us overflow in words or song. This is one such overflow:*

I often find myself crying at awkward moments, in public. College cafeteria. Professor's office. Walmart.

I rupture in crowded exposed places, as though spilling over like a sad fountain.

This happened once in the Sanctuary, as I sat in the back. But this time it was different. I was overwhelmed for a good reason– I was struck deeply by a sense of wholeness. I realized I was seen, loved and challenged simultaneously, surrounded by a community seeking Christ, a community listening to learn, a people ready and asking to be pruned– cracked open so as to heal and grow. This was a good place to cry.

Words fill this place. Scripture has seeped into the ground, filling the atmosphere with something clean and uncannily good. Goodness is something easy to miss in others, I think. You feel it, but can't name it quickly. Not like wit or bravery. But goodness is simple, loving and true– like a grandfather's smile, full of wisdom gained from years of faithfulness.

Goodness is in a thousand small moments I've experienced while here. It's in the moment during the Passing of the Peace when Mark Sprinkle came over to me from across the room (after we'd disagreed about something) and extended a hand in kindness. It's in Ed's whistle still coming through the office halls when I know he's had a trying and stressful day. It's in Corey's laughter at a joke I tell, even when he is tired and the joke really isn't that funny. It's in the moment when I open my eyes during staff prayer and see all the faces earnestly praying to our Heavenly Father.

I'll miss you dearly, Third Church. Thank you for being a family to me, if even for this short time. I'll look forward to being with you again before too long.

- Arielle Swarr