



Dear Third Family,

Happy New Year! Among the many new things before us at the start of this new year, I wanted to highlight one that holds particular relevance to you all.

As many of you already know, over the past ten months our leadership has been engaged in a visioning process led by Kevin Ford of the TAG Group. We've spent weekends and early mornings together, praying and discerning what God has for Third.

On Sunday morning, January 10, we'll be having an important town hall meeting from 10 a.m. to noon in the Fellowship Hall to debrief this time and invite you into the work that's been done and the work that needs to be done. Kevin Ford will be joining us for this meeting, and we hope you can too. We'll have two services that day, both at 8:45, in the Sanctuary and the Fellowship Hall.

One of the most exciting elements of this process has been clarifying our church's "core values." We spent time reflecting on what makes Third distinct, and out of that reflection we developed five values that we believe accurately describe the DNA of our congregation. These values do not necessarily describe all that we are or all we hope to be, but they are a good characterization of our congregational culture.

Here are the five, though not necessarily in their final written form. We share them with you now, hoping that they resonate with you as they have for us. We've found that these values give definition and clarity to what we've always known about the Third family.

BIBLICAL FAITHFULNESS

We are **rooted** in Scripture, believing that God speaks through his living and active Word today, just as he has in the past. In a time when many struggle to find meaning and direction, we believe that the Bible tells the true story of the triune God, the world, and ourselves, and we endeavor to live humbly and responsively within that story.

[Continued on next page]

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

Rev. Corey Widmer
Lead Pastor

Rev. Ed Satterfield
Associate Pastor for Congregational
Care & Administration

Rev. Rick Hutton
Associate Pastor for Students
(grades 6 - 12)

Andrea Woie
Student Ministry Associate

Tom Barila
Director of Christian Education

Lynn Hardwicke
Associate Dir. of Family Ministry

Tracie Meadows
Associate Dir. of Family Ministry

Kathy White
Associate Dir. of Family Ministry

Dr. John White
Director of Music

Kim Taulbee
Associate Music Director

Beth Nichols
Director of Lay Ministries

Becca Payne
Director of Communications

Tim Latham
Director of Young Adult Ministries

Rev. Richard Haney
Parish Associate

Rev. Nan Clarke
Parish Associate for
Care Ministries

GOSPEL COMMUNITY

We are **bound** together in our differences through the gospel of Jesus Christ. We seek to live as an authentic spiritual family that crosses generational, cultural, and vocational lines. By loving one another, we bear witness to the power of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection to reconcile us to God and neighbor.

INTENTIONAL DISCIPLESHIP

We are **growing** as Christ-followers, equipping one another for deep understanding of the faith and faithful living in every dimension of life. Training hearts, minds and hands, we aim to cultivate spiritual maturity, encourage one another towards wisdom, and help every person be transformed into the likeness of Jesus.

MISSIONAL ORIENTATION

We are **sent** out in the power of the Holy Spirit to proclaim the good news of Jesus, his grace, and his Kingdom, and to join in God's work of restoration. We lovingly engage and sacrificially give ourselves to advance the shalom of metro Richmond and the world.

CATALYTIC CULTURE

We are **creating** partnerships that invite others into the broader movement of God, focusing on the growth of the Kingdom more than that of Third Church. We foster an entrepreneurial, risk-taking culture to equip and release Spirit-led leaders to seed our region and world with new ministries, communities and institutions for the common good.

I am excited about these five values and how they ring true to who we are. As we look ahead to what God may call us to as a church, these values remind us who we are and what we must prioritize. For our February Term this year we will be doing in-depth teaching on each of these values and how they speak to our life and future.

Let's pray that God continues to foster a congregational culture that is rooted, bound, growing, sent, and creating.

Grace and peace of our Savior+
Corey Widmer

CHURCHWIDE MEETING - JANUARY 10, 2016

Mark your calendar! Sunday service changes!

Please note service time changes to accommodate a full congregational meeting—for this Sunday only.

8:45 - 9:45 a.m.

Two worship services: one in the Fellowship Hall,
one in the Sanctuary

10:00 a.m. - noon

Congregational town hall meeting following our
10-month TAG discernment process

*Childcare during the meeting is available with a reservation.
Please contact Kathy White to reserve a spot: kathyw@thirdrva.org*

MISSIONS PROFILES: *John & Lynn Lehn*

John and Lynn Lehn are missionary partners in Dubrovnik, Croatia. They have served in Eastern Europe for more than 20 years, in Croatia since 1999, and we began supporting them as mission partners in 1995.

Dubrovnik is a city of about 40,000. There are just two Protestant churches there, and only about 50 evangelical believers among them. John says, "The soil here is quite rocky spiritually, but God is at work even though it seems ever so slowly."

John also writes, though, that the church there has been blessed these past few months! Daniel was the part-time pastor, working full-time as a postman. In September he agreed to become the full-time pastor of the church. The church has not been able to afford his salary (and still cannot), but for the past 3 years it has been saving money through a special offering. So with that money and the other half of his salary coming from the church budget, the congregation voted to pay him a full salary for the next year and a half. This was a big step of faith for both the congregation and the pastor. As a confirmation, right after that decision, one young man and another couple and their two children decided to join the church! John asks for prayers that the Lord will send them more believers, especially in the next year.

John also wrote that both he and Daniel lead a prayer meeting each week in the neighborhoods where they live. John is meeting with most of the men in the church on a regular basis for discipleship. Daniel meets with individuals, especially when there are problems. Lynn leads the women's work with a bi-weekly Bible study and a quarterly outreach program.

The Lehns send out a monthly Prayer Request calendar. The current one is below so we can join them in specific prayer this month. John says one of their biggest needs is leaders. He asks for prayers that the Lord would bring more men who are gifted in leading or would be willing to learn.

Will you join us in praying for the Lehn's this month?

The Lehns' Prayer Requests						
JANUARY 2016						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					January 1 Pray for the Lord to give all of us in the church a growing love for God, His Word and people.	January 2 Pray for a renewed passion for the church to evangelize the entire Dubrovnik region.
January 3 2 Corinthians 8:9 Jesus became poor that we might become rich.	January 4 Pray for John to be filled with the power of the Spirit each day for the ministry in the church.	January 5 Pray for Rin. to be able to lead the women at her workplace in a godly manner.	January 6 Pray for the salvation of Ivi. as people in the church share the gospel with him.	January 7 Pray for each member of the church to give sacrificially of their finances for the work of the church	January 8 Pray for the Lord to help us grow the small group ministry in the church.	January 9 Pray for tomorrow's joint worship service with another church to bring unity and joy.
January 10 2 Corinthians 5:15 Through the death of Jesus, we have been made alive in Christ.	January 11 Pray for our son, John, & his wife Carolyn to find uplifting fellowship with people in their church.	January 12 Pray for Slav. to show a growing interest in reading and applying God's Word.	January 13 Pray for Sand. to embrace the gospel message and give her life to Christ.	January 14 Pray for the church to be a place where there is freedom for the believers to use their spiritual gifts.	January 15 Pray for the Lord to change the lives of youth, so that they see the potential they have in Jesus.	January 16 Pray for the Lord to bring whole families to Himself & for them to commit themselves to the church body.
January 17 Galatians 3:13 Jesus became a curse for us so that we might be blessed	January 18 Pray for our daughter-in-law, Carolyn, to continue to be a bright light for Christ at her work place	January 19 Pray for Ton. to walk in obedience to the Lord finding stability and growth in his faith and life.	January 20 Pray for Miha. to find Jesus and experience peace and comfort.	January 21 Pray for the Lord to challenge each of the believers in the church to keep the unity.	January 22 Pray for our evangelistic outreaches in the year ahead to produce lasting fruit	January 23 Pray for the Lord to send us men who would grow strong in their faith.
January 24 Luke 15:24,32 Once we are lost, but now we are found by the work of Christ.	January 25 Pray for our son, John, to finish his last semester of classes well for his doctorate in Pharmacy.	January 26 Pray for Iv. to return to regular attendance at the church meetings and live pleasing to the Lord	January 27 Pray for An.'s grandmother to come to church and in these, her last years, find Christ	January 28 Pray for the Lord to protect the church from the influences of the evil one.	January 29 Pray for the Lord to give the leadership of the church creativity & wisdom in preparing others for ministry.	January 30 Pray for the Lord to challenge the men of the church to become godly leaders in their families and church.

STOP HUNGER NOW - JANUARY 23, 2016



Twenty nine cents—what will that buy you today?

A little more than a quarter buys next to nothing in America. But that small amount will feed a family for a day, or 10 children at school for lunch. A little can go a long way.

Third's meal packaging day on January 23 will be a fun day serving together as families and as a congregation. Taking a two-hour shift packing meals while listening to live music is a fun, little thing that will make a significant impact.

Together we will put together 100,000 meals that will help end hunger for many. Join us in purchasing the meals by donating toward our \$29,000 goal and then sign up to help. We will need lots of small contributions to achieve that big goal.

Here's how you can help.

SIGN UP TO SERVE AT STOP HUNGER NOW

Register online to be part of this unique event. Sign up for any of the following slots:

Package meals in 2 shifts on Saturday, January 23:

9:30-11:30 a.m.

1:00-3:00 p.m.

Help with set-up on Friday, January 22:

7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Help with clean-up on Saturday, January 23:

3:00 – 4:00 p.m.

DONATE TO STOP HUNGER NOW

Donate towards our meal purchase goal of \$29,000. That's 100,000 meals!

Give online or at the church on Sunday mornings to help us reach our goal.



Ready to join in? Sign up today:

==== WWW.THIRDVA.ORG/REGISTRATIONS ====

Go online to sign up to volunteer for any of these shifts, or to donate. Or, stop by the Stop Hunger Now table in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday mornings.



REFUGEE CRISIS: *An Update from the Middle East*

Earlier in the fall, the Third Church family rallied together and raised \$76,461 for refugee and internally displaced Syrians and Iraqis. This unbelievable outpouring of generosity and support shows the heart of the Third congregation and your concern for the people caught up in the Middle East violence.

The funds were sent to our partners on the ground in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq in late October, and we've begun receiving updates about how the funds have been used and the impact they're making. Here's one update on a ministry that we're supporting for Syrian refugees in Lebanon. Look for more updates in future Third Press issues.

The Outreach Foundation, one of our partners working with Syrian and Iraqi relief groups, asked Third if we would be willing to direct a portion of our Syria relief funds for a special program called *Together, For the Family*. After hearing about it, the Missions Committee unanimously agreed. Here is what your gifts are doing:

Izdihar Kassis, wife of a Presbyterian pastor, lives just a few kilometers from a large Syrian refugee camp in Zahle, Lebanon. A conservative estimate of the numbers there is 85,000 families—close to 400,000 persons and a combination of Christians and Muslims. More than 40,000 babies have been born to Syrian refugees in the camps in Lebanon over the past five years. Obviously, the needs are overwhelming and growing.



Izdihar Kassis

Seeing some of the refugee children walking barefoot on a cold, rainy day near the camps, Izdihar asked some friends to help her purchase shoes. She then returned to the camp to distribute the shoes. As Izdihar recounted, "Suddenly a young woman rushed to my car. It was clear that she was tired, ill, and exhausted. She said, 'I do not want shoes, clothes, or money. I only need milk to feed my newborn baby.' I wept as I looked into a mother's eyes realizing that the most painful experience for a mother is being unable to feed her own child. I said, 'I am sorry I only have shoes, but take this money and buy milk for your baby.'

I returned home and watched the news. But I was not paying attention. I was picturing the eyes of that young woman and hearing the genuine plea to help her newborn baby."

So, Izdihar started a new ministry which she named *Together, For the Family*. Through the program, Third's gifts are being used to provide needed nutrition to nursing mothers, milk for infants, and medical care to both mothers and children.

Izdihar's glimpses into these tender little lives are touching. Speaking about one particular baby, she wrote, "Jessy is a beautiful six-month-old girl. Her father was kidnapped and has disappeared. His whereabouts are unknown. Jessy's mother lives with her three siblings in the tent and told me they have absolutely no income."

But Izdihar and her team are not just about the alleviation of human suffering. They know that they are being called to be Christ in these places of great hopelessness. Izdihar stated, "In reality, you are not only helping an infant by providing the basic needs for a dignified start in life, but you are also showing the love of Christ to the child's family. The visits that my team and I pay regularly to those refugees give us tremendous opportunities to share the Gospel. It is overwhelming when Muslim mothers express their sincere appreciation to us by saying, for example, '**While we were abandoned by our own people, you, followers of Issa al-Maseeh (Jesus Christ), have showed us real love.**'"



Baby Jessy

Third Church, your generosity is truly changing lives.

Want to hear more? Look for more stories in upcoming Third Press or get in touch with Tom Widmer: tgwidmer@gmail.com

2016 SHORT-TERM MISSION TRIPS

Jesus said in Acts 1:8, "You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth." Third Church is offering some unique opportunities to see how God is working around the world and build relationships with others of different cultures. Join us this year as we follow Jesus into the world to help change lives and be changed ourselves.

El Salvador

A team to work alongside mission partner SOI staff Humberto Alférez serving the community through English language training, micro-business support, engagement at local schools, and ministry at an orphanage. At the core of every ministry project is the goal of discipleship and sharing the love of God. Basic Spanish skills are helpful but not required. College age and up; limit 14 persons.

Trip dates: June 18-25

Deadline: April 15

Estimated cost: \$1755

Contact: Tom Barila, tomb@thirdrva.org or 282-4645 x117

High School Mexico Trip

A student ministry trip for rising sophomores through graduating senior high school students to Mexico with Amor Ministries, with the overall aim for a transformational experience that manifests the justice, kindness, and humility of Jesus Christ. The team will build a home for a family that will be connected to a local congregation.

Trip dates: July 3-9

Deadline: December 2015

Estimated cost: \$955 per person

Contact: Rick Hutton, rickh@thirdrva.org or 282-4645 x 129

Port-au-Prince, Haiti

A multi-generational team serving our mission partner Haiti Outreach Ministries with three projects: home construction, medical assistance and a vacation Bible school. Children and adults, age 14 and up, are welcome. No skills needed for construction and Bible school but medical professionals are needed.

Trip dates: July 16-23

Deadline: March 20

Estimated cost: \$1570 per person

Informational meetings: Brief drop-in gatherings for informational materials: January 18, 25, and February 22 in the Parlor at 10:15 a.m. and 12:20 p.m.

Contact: Billy and Jen Martin, JenRMartin@outlook.com or (843) 364-0885

Bismarck, North Dakota

Assisting in some construction and a one-week Young Life style summer camp for middle and high school Native Americans at Standing Rock Reservation. We will be involved with a range of activities including recreation, music, shepherding students, cooking, cleaning and light maintenance. This is a family-friendly trip.

Trip dates: August 6-13 (dates tentative)

Estimated cost: \$800

Contact: Fred Whitten, fawhitten@comcast.net or 741-7962

Pray now to ask if God is calling you to serve in this way in 2016. And be on the lookout for more informational meetings and sign-ups in the weeks to come!

DISCIPLESHIP AT THIRD

FEBRUARY TERM - *Coming up soon!*

What is the February Term?

Each winter, we take the month of February to get on the same page as a congregation by combining our adult Sunday discipleship classes for a month. Together, we'll study an issue that has bearing on our lives as Christ-followers no matter what age or stage of life we find ourselves in. This year, we will be gathering in the Fellowship Hall from 10:00 - 11:00 a.m., our normal education hour.

We'll be looking at Third's core: who are we and how God is forming us as his people. We'll be digging deeper into our core values:

- **BIBLICAL FAITHFULNESS**
- **GOSPEL COMMUNITY**
- **INTENTIONAL DISCIPLESHIP**
- **MISSIONAL ORIENTATION**
- **CATALYTIC CULTURE**

We hope you all can join us in this unique opportunity to study together as a congregation.

SUNDAY MORNING DISCIPLESHIP

Starting in January, all of our Sunday morning Bible study and fellowship classes will be up and running again! We invite you to try a few to figure out which is the best fit for you.

FELLOWSHIP

9:45 - 11:30 a.m.

Snacks, community, and coffee
Fellowship Hall

YOUNG ADULT COMMUNITY

Led by: Chris White and Sarah Londrey
Room 215

WHERE IS GOD IN THE BUSYNESS AND BUSINESS OF LIFE?

Hosted by Fusion Fellowship
Room 217

ADDICTION & GRACE

Love and Spirituality in the Healing of Addictions
Led by: Mary Damon
Hosted by Metamorphosis
500 Forest Ave, Room 109

"DID NOT OUR HEARTS BURN WITHIN US?"

A study of the Book of Luke
Led by: Jennifer Parham, Grant Holbrook,
Andrew Fuller
Hosted by Reveal
Room 213

A STUDY OF HEBREWS

Led by Dave Carroll
Hosted by Good News Fellowship
Conference Room (Room 101)

MARRIAGE FELLOWSHIP

Led by: Keith and Connie Byers
Room 209

SERMON CHAT

Led by: Tom Barila and other special guests
Room 207 (new location)

RECONNECT - Wednesdays at Third

Wednesdays at Third start back up on Wednesday, January 13 and will run through March 23. So, what's new this Winter/Spring?

SMILE: Single Moms in the Lord's Embrace

Dinner and fellowship for single moms.
4th Wednesday of the month

Special Music Lessons

Kids grades 1-4 will enjoy a full musical introduction: bells, choirs, and music education.
Led by John White

Guided Tour of the Bible

A new, interactive study.
Led by Ed Satterfield

Expanded ESL and Tutoring Ministry

More volunteers needed!

Refresh: Young women's Bible study

1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month

Ash Wednesday Service

Special service to begin the Lenten season.
February 10

More information for these programs and all our other Wednesday night programming can be found here: thirdrva.org/wednesdays-at-third



BARNABAS TRAINING

Taking Conversations Deeper Barnabas Training January 30, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

We often wish that we could connect more deeply with family and friends, or long to be a better help as we talk with someone who is dealing with something very difficult. What do we say? What can we do?

We want to invite you to join a seminar that will greatly help you get started taking conversations deeper and making them more effective in helping and supporting others. Barnabas Training equips you to better encourage friends facing difficult times in life and faith. This biblically-based seminar helps you understand others by gaining a deeper understanding of your own heart. Each of us has more to learn about caring more effectively for others or to pursue greater opportunities to share the good news of Jesus with others. This training will help you get started on that path, whether in close relationships with your family, or with friends, neighbors and co-workers.

Lisa Ould and others will lead Barnabas Training Basic on **January 30, 2016** from 9:00 to 4:00 p.m. at Velocity Church, 3330 Cox Road. The seminar will help you better understand yourself and others and get you started learning some vital skills in connecting with others in deeper friendship.

**Sign up on the Barnabas Center website by January 15 for \$80.00 discounted cost:
thebarnabascenter.org/event/btb-ricmond-january-30-2016.**

Call Ed Satterfield for more information or assistance with cost at 282-4645.

VOLUNTEER AT THIRD

Why volunteer?

- Make new friends
- Make a difference
- Develop new skills
- Share your talents
- Have fun
- Bring a friend



Elizabeth Flanary and
Peggy Larmore

We need your help!

We have many opportunities around Third for all levels of volunteering. Some tasks are on an as-needed basis and others occur regularly. If you feel you do not have the necessary skills, we will train you. We hope you will share your time and talents with us soon. We need assistance with any of the following:

Church Pews: Weekly check of the church pews to ensure there are pew pads, brochures, cards, and pencils.

Office Admin: Week-day assistance with miscellaneous office tasks and answering phones in the church office.

Tab & Gab: Once a month assistance with the church newsletter from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. in the kitchen at the church office. Usually the 3rd Thursday of each month.

Proofreading: Times and days vary.

For more information or to sign up, contact Miranda Patterson at 282-4645 ext. 133 or mirandap@thirdrva.org.

***We love our volunteers and want to thank them for another great year!
We greatly appreciate every minute of the time they share with us.***



Vickie O'Dell, Mary Ann Hancock, and Elva White



Doug Kinney and Lou
Rutherford at Tab & Gab



Cary Wallace, Carolyn
Oakley, and Christine Darby



John Dean



Stephanie Holt and
Emily Oostdyke

***Thank you to these volunteers and the many more that
make our church and office run smoothly!***

WOMEN'S MINISTRY - SMILE

Third Family,

Several years ago, I found myself in a place I never thought I would be: a divorced single mother of a young son. Life is full of challenges, and being a single parent is definitely one of them. Let's face it— parenting is hard for two people working together with the Lord as their guide. As parents, we have many responsibilities and through God's perfect design, those responsibilities are shared between husband and wife. Now, if you're married, just imagine how it feels when your spouse is out of town for a week and you're left to run your household alone. Are you overwhelmed, overworked and exhausted? Often, this is the life of a single parent. Some single mothers are blessed to have a coparent, but many do not and are raising their children and running their household entirely on their own. In addition, being a single mother can be lonely, intimidating, scary and drive you to isolation.

I have to admit, before I found myself in this situation, I passed judgment on many women in similar circumstances. At the time, I couldn't relate and felt as though many of them were just suffering the consequences of their own poor decision making. This thinking was foolish, unloving and did not reflect Christ at all. Every single mother has a story just like anyone else. Some of us are single mothers as a result of a death, some as a result of someone else's actions and some as a result of our own actions. Each circumstance is tragic and just like anyone else we are broken people in need of a Savior.



SMILE GROUP MEETINGS
4th Wednesday of the month
Beginning Jan. 27
6:00 - 7:30 PM

Through my own hardship, I have felt God put it on my heart to serve other single mothers. Last January, I began searching to see what already existed for single mothers in the Richmond area and I discovered a group called SMILE (Single Moms In the Lord's Embrace) that was meeting at First Baptist Church each month. I attended the January meeting and loved it. The group is diverse and has been made up of about 20 women and 20-40 children from Richmond and the surrounding areas. Childcare is offered, giving the women some time to themselves. We share a meal, hear from a speaker on practical life skills or parenting and then end the time with a devotion and prayer. Speakers have included social workers, police officers, auto mechanics, lawyers, financial specialists, experienced single mothers and many more.

Over the past year, I have found the SMILE group to be a supportive community that meets many practical needs for single moms and I am pleased to announce our partnership with First Baptist Church to bring a SMILE meeting here at Third Church. It is my hope that bringing this ministry to Third will reach more women in the area. Our team includes Beth Nichols, Kathy White, Jan Johnston, Carolyn Weyland, Mary Lou Carter, Emma Fitch and me, Kathryn Pruett. We will meet on the fourth Wednesday of each month with a format similar to the First Baptist meeting.

We are asking that small groups at Third prayerfully consider serving together by providing a meal for the group once during the year. In addition, we are seeking volunteers to come each month and work with the children. Third's first SMILE meeting will kick off on January 27, 2016 with Abe Lincoln's team providing his famous spaghetti dinner and Margie Satterfield speaking on forgiveness. If you would like to bless the SMILE ministry by providing a meal or child-care, please contact me at kbpruett@gmail.com.

Your Sister in Christ,
Kathryn Pruett

MEN'S MINISTRY

MEN'S BI-MONTHLY DINNER - *Tuesday, January 5, 6:00 - 8:00*



Join Third's Men's Ministry for dinner and a message from Tommy Thompson. Tommy will share his annual New Year's message. This year's theme: *Becoming and Being Christ's Men*. Dinner will be catered by Alfreda Beach.

Register (\$5) online: thirdva.org/registrations.

ANNUAL MEN'S RETREAT - February 5-6, 2016

Sign up for the Annual Men's Retreat, this year right here in the Richmond area! Back by popular demand: Jerry Leachman will be joining us. Jerry is an awesome speaker and former Young Life area director, former chaplain for the Washington Redskins, and men's ministry leader throughout the Washington metropolitan area. He teaches the largest men's Community Bible Study in the U.S. at McLean Bible Church, and regularly speaks throughout the U.S. and overseas at U.S. military installations.

We're excited to welcome Jerry back, as he's been a well-received speaker at three of our retreats since 1994.

February 5, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. & February 6, 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Meals Included!

Register (\$45) online: thirdva.org/registrations.

FAMILY MINISTRY - Parent Forum: January 20, 2016

How can parents, grandparents, and other Christian adults speak into the messy culture that surrounds our children? Third Church family and student ministry wants to equip parents to think "christianly" in an ever-increasing secular society and empower them to address tough issues with their children.

We invite you to attend a parent forum on **Wednesday, January 20 from 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary**. This event is targeted for parents with children in 5th grade and older. We will ask you to submit questions through our website and our panel will help answer questions and offer counsel and guidance that night.

Our panelists include:

- Corey Widmer, Lead Pastor at Third
- Rick Hutton, Associate Pastor for Student Ministry
- Dr. Jera Nelson Cunningham, Ph.D., Licensed Clinical Psychologist
- Nan Clarke, Parish Associate, mother and grandmother

For more information, or to submit a question, go to: thirdva.org/news-events/parent-forum.

Questions? Contact Tracie Meadows at traciem@thirdva.org

NEWCOMERS MINISTRY

Interested in learning more about Third, or considering membership? Join us in our next Newcomers Class where you will learn about Third's vision for worship, discipleship, community, serving, and outreach. At the end of the class, you'll have an opportunity to become a member of Third.



NEXT NEWCOMERS CLASS:

- **Thursday evening:** January 14, 7 - 8:30 p.m.
- **Friday evening:** January 15, 6-9 p.m. with dinner
- **Saturday morning:** January 16, 9 a.m. -12 p.m.
- **Sunday morning:** January 17, joining services for those deciding to become members

To sign up, register online at www.thirdrva.org/membership or contact Beth Nichols at bethn@thirdrva.org or (804) 282-4645 ext. 124. Childcare is provided with a reservation for the class.

WELCOME COFFEE



If you are new to Third, or if you meet someone new to Third, please join us on one of the following Sundays for a Welcome Coffee in the Parlor from 9:45-11:00.

This is a time when visitors can meet Corey and some of our lay leaders, see a short video about the vision and mission of Third, and find ways to connect at Third.

January 3 | January 31
9:45 - 11:00 a.m.
in the Parlor

RACE AND THE CHURCH: A New Series

"Race and the Church" is a series taking place over the next 12 months, where a few churches in our community are creating a space for us to learn and reflect upon the important issues surrounding race and ethnicity. We hope to develop a fuller grasp of how the past affects the present, and work towards a framework through which we might pursue multi-ethnic and cross-cultural churches. We are committed to the gospel of Jesus Christ and his glorious prayer that we might be one (John 17:11).

For the full schedule and more information, visit: raceandthechurch.com.

Race and History: How does it affect the here and now?

January 30, 2016 | 9:00 a.m.
West End Presbyterian Church
Led by Sean Michael Lucas

SUMMARY: *Can we let the past be the past and, instead of reflecting upon it, move on? There is a lot of hurt when we discuss the past, specifically as it relates to racism, slavery, and the church's involvement. Wouldn't it be better to move on and embrace what God is doing in the now versus dwelling on the past and even repenting of past actions we did not commit? If it is right to acknowledge and repent of the past, how we can do that and move forward so that we have a brighter future?*

DINNER 8s



Want to meet more folks at Third over a good meal?

Join Dinner 8s, where you're placed into a supper group that meets once a month from January through April. You'll eat together in one another's homes and at restaurants.

Ready to sign up? Register at thirdrva.org/registrations or pick up a form at the church, fill it out, and drop it in the offering plate. Deadline is Dec. 31.

Questions? Contact Allene Brown at allenedbrown@gmail.com or 804-441-1668.

SMALL GROUP STORY

Sitting with Tough Questions

"The author describes the universal feelings of loneliness, rejection, envy, and feeling overlooked by God. Be honest with the group about what part of this touches a nerve in your heart."



This was one of the discussion questions during our weekly small group. As the facilitator for the week read the question aloud, the rest of us looked around at each other. Who would share first? How honest should we actually be? Could we make a nonverbal agreement to only go but so deep? Since we are about halfway through this book, we have gotten used to the author's intense questions, prodding us to dig deeply and share freely. We weren't used to actually getting that deep ourselves, though. It's not something that most of us do regularly because it's scary and uncomfortable. When the book your small group is reading asks such intense questions, an interesting thing happens. You begin to get really used to silence.

To be fair, not every night is full of silence. Many nights are full of good discussion, as we share our thoughts and questions about who we are and who God is. But occasionally, silence sets in or discussion stays light. Sometimes it is because the questions hit too deep a nerve and the pain is too close to speak out loud. And sometimes the work of examining our hearts and finding the words to express those longings just feels too exhausting, like an out-of-shape runner attempting a race without having run in a long time. Then, once in a while, in the silence of reflection after a question has been asked, a brave voice breaks in and begins to share. And then, following her example, another woman opens up, and another. Until we have all taken turns revealing a little bit more of our hearts than we had before. And somehow, through the rhythms of all these meetings, I find we are deepening the grooves of community. Whether there is lots of sharing or mostly quiet reflecting, the point is we are doing this together. We are committing to the discipline and delight of seeking Jesus together. It is not always comfortable but I find it is so often what I need: people who are willing to sit with me as we explore the tough questions in life. Because the truth is that the tough questions are always there but it is a beautiful thing to know that I don't have to explore them alone.

Rose Estes

If you are interested in being part of a small group, please contact Beth Nichols at bethn@thirdrva.org with the following information: type of group (mixed, men, women) and your availability. We will seek to connect you with an existing group or with others who are interested in forming a new small group.

CONFLICT COACHING WORKSHOP - Feb. 19-20, 2016



Relationships in Peace Ministry has invited Peacemaker Ministries to send two of their trainers to Third Church. These are highly skilled and experienced peacemakers who will teach Third's members and leaders how to coach others through a conflict.

Who is this for? Anyone in the Body of Christ who needs to know how to coach others to resolve a conflict. This workshop is for you:

- If others approach you for advice in how to handle a conflict situation, and you need tools to help them
- If you often feel helpless and awkward in the face of your own conflicted relationships
- If your ministry puts you in the path of helping others who struggle with conflict

What will I learn?

- Practical steps to resolve conflict.
- Biblical instruction showing how to help others in conflict.
- Ways to improve family relationships.
- A structure for conflict coaching that develops confidence in helping others.
- Aspects of effective conflict coaching, including gathering data, assigning homework, and applying Scripture to the heart.
- How to provide encouragement, godly advice, and prayer support to an individual who is struggling with a conflict.

WHEN

Two full days
Friday, Feb. 19 - Saturday, Feb. 20
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

COST

\$240*
**Since Third is hosting, we qualify for a \$50 discount. Contact relationshipsinpeace.thirdrva@gmail.com to get the discount code.*

PREP MATERIALS

The two-day event requires some preparation and homework. Materials will be sent to you upon registration.

WHAT IS LIVE TRAINING?

No videos! Peacemaker Ministries is sending two trainers to deliver the training. They'll teach conflict coaching tools, and you'll observe their demonstrations of how to use them. Then, you'll practice using the tools and discuss how to use them in your ministry setting.

If you have further questions, please contact Relationships In Peace Ministry at RelationshipsInPeace.ThirdRVA@gmail.com or call Margie Satterfield (804) 819-0260

COMMONWEALTH PRAYER BREAKFAST

The 50th annual Commonwealth Prayer Breakfast will be held on **Wednesday, January 13, 2016 at 7:00 a.m.** in the Greater Richmond Convention Center.

Our speaker is Ravi Zacharias, an evangelist respected worldwide as an author, speaker, and teacher. A native of India who immigrated to Canada as a young man, he now leads a vibrant international ministry in Atlanta (rzim.org).

Individual tickets are \$35. A Table Host package of 10 seats is \$350. Tickets may be purchased by credit card online at www.commonwealthprayerbreakfast.org. (There is a small processing fee for individual tickets; no processing fee is added for Table Host packages.) For additional information, please contact VACPB@aol.com.

EVENT & FUNDRAISING RECAPS

ADVENT CELEBRATION

On November 29, over 150 people gathered in the Fellowship Hall for Third's Family Advent Celebration, a time of worship and teaching. Gina Maio spoke about the meaning of Advent and how to use an Advent wreath as part of preparation for Christmas. Families worked together to create their own Advent wreath.

One of Family Ministry's Faith Milestones is family prayer and devotion, and we hope our Third families feel more equipped to use Advent as a time to teach their children about Jesus. For more information about Faith Milestones, please visit: thirdrva.org/faith-milestones.



ANNUAL WOMEN'S CHRISTMAS DINNER

Approximately 175 women joined us for our annual Christmas dinner on December 1. Rev. Gina Maio gave a scriptural meditation from John 1 and encouraged us in the ways we can be open to God's presence in our lives. Cortney Allen, Erin Gardner, and Jean Johnson (via videotape) shared their personal stories.

See Third's website for women's groups that meet at Third on a regular basis and be sure you are signed up for the Women's Ministry monthly email. Contact Beth Nichols (bethn@thirdrva.org) to get involved or learn more.



: Corey Widmer
at Lessons & Carols

Are you following @ThirdRVA?

Keep up with us throughout the week, and share what's happening at Third.

Twitter: @thirdrva

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Facebook: Third RVA

Tag us for a chance to have your pictures or tweets featured in the next issue of Third Press!

Third Church
500 Forest Avenue
Richmond, Virginia 23229
804.282.4645

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makeRVA RESIDENCY: with the Fretful Porcupine

January 19 through 24, Third's arts outreach makeRVA will welcome the Fretful Porcupine back to Richmond for another short-term residency on the intersection of creativity, conversation and community. The duo of songwriter/fiddler Jake Armerding and saxophonist/creative catalyst Kevin Gosa play "roots chamber music" that hovers at the intersection of hymns, traditional and bluegrass, and jazz improvisation. They perform with a variety of other ensembles, as well as leading worship and teaching musicianship skills and how to understand music as an embodied community, rather than a commodity or background noise.

During previous visits to Richmond, they have been presenters in our Makers Series and have given performances and workshops at schools, nursing homes and on street corners. While they're in Richmond this time, they'll be playing and giving clinics at Veritas School, Collegiate, St. Christophers and (still pending), Westover Hills Elementary School. They'll also work with advanced jazz students at VCU and give a performance at Black Iris Music's "Tiny Bar"—an alternative concert venue and gallery in midtown Richmond. Finally, they'll lead worship with our team in Sunday morning services on the 24th.

One of the hallmarks of Kevin's and Jake's way of being musicians is creating new music (and human connections) in and for small, specific local settings—like houses, parks and street corners. If you'd be interested in attending a house-show that week, please get in touch with Mark Sprinkle for details (marksprinkle@mac.com). In the meantime, you can read about Jake and Kevin and hear some of their music at www.thefretfulporcupine.com.



Look for details of events on the website in early January.