

This year, Faith Commitment Sunday is November 6. That Sunday morning in our services we'll offer to God our giving commitments to the church for the coming year. This year we've chosen the phrase "The Gift of the Kingdom," which comes from Luke 12:32, as our theme for Stewardship season.

As we have been slowly making our way through the book of Luke over the past year, we've been noting that Jesus is preoccupied with the Kingdom of God. To quote John Ortberg, "The gospel is not just the minimal entrance requirements to get into heaven." No, according to Jesus, the gospel is the good news of God's Kingdom breaking into the world. This is a Kingdom in which the proud are brought low, the humble are lifted high, the "insiders" are put out, and the "outsiders" are brought in. It is a Kingdom that turns our lives inside out and upside down, calling us to live differently in every conceivable way. Being a disciple is learning to live in the Kingdom of Jesus.

One particular aspect of the Kingdom that Jesus spends a lot of time talking about in the book of Luke is money. On the one hand, Jesus offers some severe warnings about money and wealth. He emphasizes that the love of money chokes out the seed of the gospel and keeps us from bearing fruit (Luke 8:14). On the other hand, Jesus suggests that money can now be a powerful resource for good because of our loyalty to him. When we are no longer enslaved to the need for wealth, we can use money to give generously to others and to use it strategically for the work of his Kingdom (Luke 12:33).

The basis for this new approach to money is grace. Jesus tells us that "the Father is pleased to give you the Kingdom." The Kingdom is a gift, free of charge! That means on the one hand we can rest secure in the Father's provision, knowing that all we really need is given by his generous grace. On the other hand, it means that because we have received such abundance from God, we can give freely and joyfully to his Kingdom work in the world. All our giving flows from grace.

[Continued]

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)

Laurie Jaworski
Mission Pastor

Andrea Woie
Student Ministry Associate

Alan Ware
Director of Finance & Administration

Tom Barila
Director of Christian Education

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

Alex Sawyer
Technical Director

Tim Latham
Director of Young Adult Ministries

Rev. Richard Haney
Parish Associate

Rev. Nan Clarke
Parish Associate
Care Ministries

As we head into 2017, we must be thoughtful, prayerful and wise about how we are stewarding God's precious resources. We are planning our budget carefully, and we will all be in this together as we anticipate how God is calling us to participate in his mission together. But above all, my prayer for us is that God will renew our deep gratitude for his grace—for the gift of the Kingdom. Out of that gratitude, may he foster in us deep trust and joyful generosity.

Grace and peace of our Savior+

Corey Widmer

THE GIFT OF THE KINGDOM 2016 STEWARDSHIP SEASON

How will you respond to God's faithfulness?

October 16 - November 20
Faith Commitment Sunday: November 6

The logo for "Explore God" features the word "explore" in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font, followed by "God" in a larger, blue, uppercase, sans-serif font. A small trademark symbol (TM) is positioned to the upper right of the "d" in "God". The background is black.

We hope you have been encouraged and challenged by the recent sermon series.

If you'd like to explore even more, I'd encourage you to take a look at ExploreGod.com as it has some great articles, resources and videos. Additionally, I'd like to invite you to consider hosting a discussion group in your neighborhood, your place of employment, or creating some space in your existing Bible study group using the Explore God discussion guides. I'd be happy to help get you started with the Explore God discussion guides, as well as provide the training to help foster a rich experience for your group, family, or friends.

- Tom Barila (tomb@thirdrva.org, 282-4645)

THIRD PRESS DEADLINE FOR

November: Friday, October 14

Submit to: beccap@thirdrva.org



HOW WOULD JESUS VOTE?

A REFLECTION BY COREY WIDMER

It's that time again when American citizens vote for a president. It goes without saying, however, that this year feels different for a lot of unusual reasons. As one of your pastors, I work hard not to make political statements or take political sides. I believe that one of my main callings is to help spiritually shepherd and disciple the people of God in the way of Jesus, so that you can make your own wise and Spirit-led decisions in your public life, including the way you vote. In that light, here are a few reflections to remember as you pray and consider your responsibility on November 8th.

Reminder #1: Politics is not a Pass for Christian Discipleship.

Brian Roberts notes that political discourse is like the Vegas of Christianity – it's that place where sin and indiscretion are winked at and excused. Hate speech, vitriolic language, childish names, caricaturing opposing viewpoints— it seems like Christians think politics is a realm where sin can be overlooked. However, if you are a Christian there is no area of your life over which Jesus does not reign and call you to live as his follower, bearing the fruit of his Spirit. This includes how you talk about politics, what you post on Facebook, and what you say to your sympathetic friends in private about what "those people" think and do. "Walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love" (Eph. 4:1-2). This command applies to every part of your life.

Reminder #2: The Kingdom of God is not of this world.

Every time an election occurs, some Christians react as if the Kingdom of God has been destroyed or has triumphed depending on who was elected. We must remember, however, that Jesus was very clear that his Kingdom is not of this world. That means no political platform, party or policy can ever be fully aligned with the Kingdom of Jesus. Scripture does not endorse one particular political platform over the other. Political parties will advocate for some biblical values that we can affirm, but no party supports all of them. When a Christian suggests otherwise by being so indefatigably committed to a political platform or party, he or she has embraced loyalty to an earthly agenda over and above the agenda of Jesus Christ, which cannot be contained or owned by any human program. The Kingdom of God brings judgment to every human platform, for the Kingdom of God is not of this world (John 18:36).

What does that mean for our vote? Christians have many different ideas about what that means for this particular election—I have read a lot of them! So ultimately, each person must consider his or her own conscience before God, seek leading from the Holy Spirit, talk with trusted Christian friends, and ultimately cast their vote in a way that most aligns with what they believe to be the way of love. But we do so understanding the ambiguity of what we do, and that ultimately our allegiance lies with Jesus and his Kingdom.

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Reminder #3: Jesus's community transcends earthly divisions.

Election season can really divide people, even fellow Christians. But let me suggest to you that if you feel more solidarity with those who share your politics but not your faith, then you very well may have given your allegiance to the wrong kingdom. Jesus called together through his grace people who would never otherwise have been together. Among his own disciples was Simon the Zealot (radical conservative) and Matthew the tax collector (social liberal), who now were brothers under the same King. In our church we have people with different positions and viewpoints all in the same community. If we are going to "one another" well, our political loyalties must be demoted beneath our primary loyalty to Jesus Christ.

Reminder #4: Jesus is Lord

Thanks be to God—we only have one Messiah and he is not up for re-election! We already have a Lord and King and Sovereign and he can never lose. Our hope for our world is in no man, no ideology, no policy, but in the Lord Jesus Christ, his death and resurrection and his coming again to make all things new. Please believe this. Please live this. Please hold fast to this singular Hope.

MORE RESOURCES

Q Commons: "Engaging Our Divided Nation"

Thursday, October 13, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m., Veritas School

During this special event, Richmond will join with thousands of attendees in hundreds of cities to be equipped on how to engage this unique, American moment. It is a 2-hour live event that will educate Christians on how they can bring hope and leadership to their communities. Nationally broadcast speakers include author and apologist Ravi Zacharias, authors and political commentators Kirsten Powers and Ross Douthat, and Grammy-award winning hip-hop artist Lecrae. Local speakers include Third's own Corey Widmer and Arrabon's David Bailey.

For more info and to register to join: qcommons.com/richmond

The Voting Booth (E-Book)

By Skye Jethani

For generations, Christians have been told to either escape the culture to avoid its ungodliness, or to aggressively engage the culture by seeking power and control over it. But are those a Christian's only options? *The Voting Booth*, written by Skye Jethani, writer and former editor of Christianity Today's *Leadership Journal*, presents a third path for a new generation of Christians seeking to love both God and their neighbor.

To download the free e-book, visit: skyejethani.com/video-how-should-christians-vote

How to Pick a President (E-Book)

Contributors include: Mark Galli, Andy Crouch, Russell Moore, Ed Stetzer, and more.

Many Americans are discouraged, disillusioned, frustrated, and downright confused—not only by the political uproar, but also with the harrowing decision we all face come Election Day. Voters are now wondering: Do I vote along traditional party lines? Do I choose a third-party candidate? Do I simply refuse to cast a ballot? Questions like these aren't easy to answer. So we've gathered articles from some of the most thoughtful Christianity Today writers for this CT book.

To download the free e-book, visit: amazon.com/How-Pick-President-Clinton-Trump/dp/0917463714



NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS



ED SATTERFIELD'S SABBATICAL **October 1 - December 31**

Third has been committed to providing sabbatical time for all its pastors and ministry directors every seven years. This time of disengagement from ministry responsibilities is intended to provide a time of refreshment so that staff return with fresh perspective and energy.

Ed will be taking three months starting October 1 and running through the end of the year. While he is away, other arrangements have been made to cover his areas of responsibility. Andi Redmond will be the point of contact and can direct you to the appropriate leaders who will be filling in. Contact Andi at andir@thirdrva.org or by calling the church office, 282-4645.



Please be in prayer for Ed that this will be a rich time of refreshment!

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING **Sunday, November 20**

Please mark your calendar for our next congregational meeting on Sunday, November 20, following the 11:15 a.m. service. The purpose of this meeting will be to elect the Deacons, Trustees, and Elders who will begin serving in 2017, as well as elect the Nominating Committee for 2017.



UPCOMING MINISTRY EVENTS

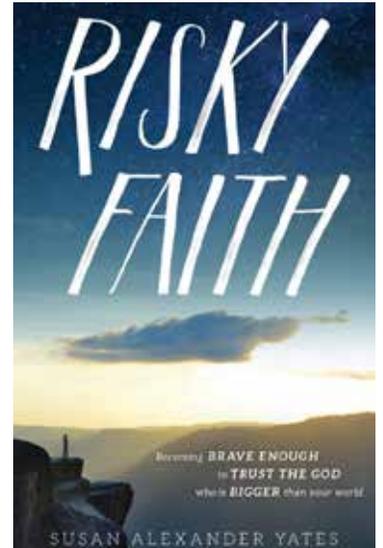
WOMEN'S MINISTRY

Ladies of Third! Mark your calendars for the annual Women's Conference.

Friday evening, November 4
Saturday morning, November 5
Third Church

This year, we're welcoming Susan Yates, the author of thirteen books and who speaks both nationally and internationally. In our conference this year, she will be helping us gain a new perspective and vision to walk in the confidence of a God so much bigger than the challenges we often face. We hope you will join us for this rich time!

Friday evening: 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary
Saturday morning: 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 in the Fellowship Hall



Sign up at thirdrva.org/events. **Questions?** Contact Lauren Luck at lauren.luck@gmail.com.

MEN'S MINISTRY

MONTHLY DINNERS THIS FALL:
October 4 & November 1
6:00 - 8:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall

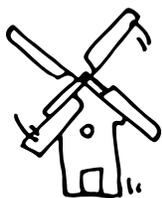
We were made for friendship. Not social networks, not acquaintances, and not buddies – but vulnerable and committed friendships. While these kinds of friendships glorify God, enable us to love one another, and make us more like Jesus, we live in a culture that makes them increasingly difficult and uncommon.



Join us at the Third Men's Dinner on **Tuesday, October 4 at 6 p.m.** to talk about the biblical support for covenant friendships, the daily practices that make this kind of counter-cultural friendship possible, and the hope we have at Third to build a culture of covenant friendships that blesses us and our neighbors. Justin Earley will be leading us. Please bring a friend!

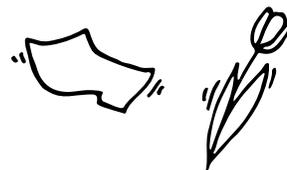
Dinner (\$7) catered by Alfreda Beach. Sign up: thirdrva.org/news-events/mens-monthly-dinner.

FAMILY MINISTRY



"THIS ISN'T WHAT I SIGNED UP FOR! WELCOME TO HOLLAND."

Sunday, October 16, 12:30-2:00 p.m.
Fellowship Hall
Special Speaker: Ellen Stamps



As family leaders, many of us find ourselves facing challenges we never expected. Parenting is a journey, and sometimes we end up in a place we didn't anticipate. Our children may be struggling in school ... or maybe we're concerned about social issues ... maybe there's a diagnosed condition — or maybe not. Life is good, but times can be tough. If this describes you, you're not alone at Third Church.

Join us on October 16 for lunch and casual conversation. This will be a family networking opportunity to get encouragement, talk informally, and share resources, inspired by the essay "[Welcome to Holland](https://our-kids.org/archives/Holland.html)" by Emily Perl Kingsley. (For the full essay, visit: our-kids.org/archives/Holland.html)

Ellen Stamps, former Personal Assistant to Corrie Ten Boom (and native of Holland), will share. Ellen has a real heart for parents and families who find themselves in difficult situations. There will also be small groups where you can chat with parents and professionals about physical issues, emotional issues, and developmental issues your child and family may be facing. We're not interested in labels. We simply want to come together to offer empathy, support, and practical experience.

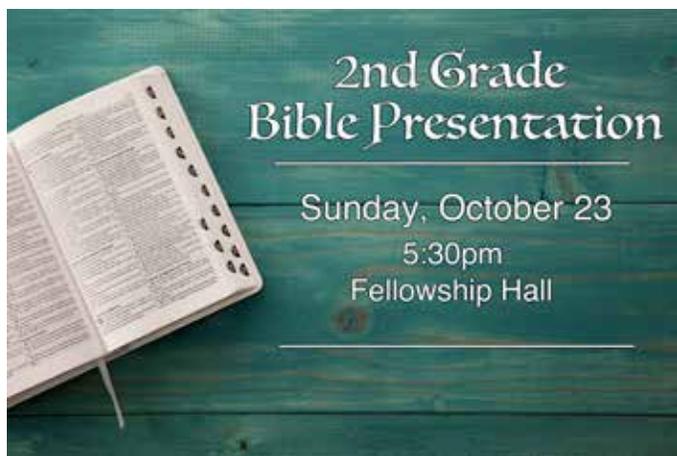
Register (for free!) today: thirdrva.org/events

2nd GRADE BIBLE PRESENTATION AND DINNER

Sunday, October 23
5:30 p.m., Fellowship Hall

Second grade students and their families are invited to gather for dinner and fellowship, hear a message on the importance of God's word in our lives, and then celebrate with the formal presentation of a Bible for each second grade student at Third.

RSVP to Tracie Meadows no later than
October 18: traciem@thirdrva.org, 282-4645.



MISSIONS

BEHIND THE HEADLINES: WHAT IS GOING ON WITHIN ISLAM?

AN EVENING OF WORSHIP, LECTURE, AND DESSERT

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29, 6:30 P.M.

FELLOWSHIP HALL

More people in Iran have turned to Christ in the last 14 years, than they have in the past 1300 years! Join us on October 29 to worship together and hear from Sasan Tavassoli, a former Shi'ite Muslim from Iran, about engaging Christians for effective witness to Muslims in Iran.

About Sasan: In 1985, Sasan came to faith in Christ as the result of the ministry of a group of American missionaries while he was living in Portugal. He has devoted his life to building up the body of Christ among Iranians through a ministry of teaching that is carried out in three overlapping circles of work. The first is ministry with Iranian Christians, both inside and outside of Iran. The second is a satellite teaching ministry focused on Iranian believers. The third circle is ministry with non-Iranian Christians who wish to engage in effective witness among Muslims.



ISRAEL TRIP 2017

SAVE THE DATE! Our next trip is planned for **June 17 - 26, 2017***. If you would like to join the trip, please let Tom know as soon as possible, as we expect the trip to reach our capacity of 30. (*We are currently planning to leave June 17, 18, or 19, and return 10 days later, depending on the best flight costs and times.)

Want to learn more about the trip? Becky, a member of Third, was one of the sojourners to Israel this Spring with 28 others from Third. She wrote a blog during the trip and titled it "[Trip of a Lifetime.](#)" Read through her blog to get a taste for the places and sites we'll most likely visit in 2017.

Becky's Blog: rkwetzels.wordpress.com/2016/05/27/links-for-the-trip-of-a-lifetime

Ready to sign up? Contact Tom Barila at tomb@thirdrva.org or by calling the office 282-4645.

DISCIPLESHIP

New Discipleship Class

CAN WE TALK: HOW DOES AN ANCIENT BOOK GUIDE MODERN LIFE?

STARTS: OCTOBER 30 AND RUNS 7 WEEKS

When we approach the Bible it is easier to say, "God says it, I believe it, that settles it," than it is to actually put this adage into practice in our modern world. In different times and different places Christians have used a variety of reading strategies to interpret and apply Scripture for their time and place. The purpose of this fellowship class is to develop a reading strategy that is both faithful to the Book and applicable to the complexity of our 21st century lives.

Led by: Nan and Boyd Clarke

Location: Fellowship Hall

COMMUNITY POSTINGS



The Care 2 Share Toy Drive collects gently used, like-new toys, and delivers them to children in need throughout the metro Richmond area. Last year, through 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 500 children.

We are accepting donations of **books, toys, stuffed animals, and wrapping supplies** now through November 27, for the holiday season. We're also looking for some volunteers who'd be willing to donate their time to sort, wrap, and tag gifts on volunteer days.

All donations should meet the following criteria:

- Each toy should be in a bag or box containing all its parts.
- Each toy should be clean, appear to be new, and in good working order.

Donations can be dropped off as follows:

- Place in the bin next to Room 109
- By contacting Carolyn Lilly at 564-7145 or carolynlilly@comcast.net to arrange a pick-up or drop-off



FOR RENT - Large upstairs furnished master bedroom and private bath with sitting room in lovely neighborhood off Huguenot Rd. Ideal for professional female. Prefer Christian, no smoking/alcohol. Private parking. \$500 a month, includes all utilities and cable. References required. Must be employed. Available now. Call 804-794-8440 or 804-221-7365.

FALL CALENDAR

**Oct.
1**

Deep Run Park

THIRD'S BIG BIKE RIDE

Saturday, October 1 starting at 12 p.m., we'll host a church-wide bike ride at Deep Run Park. Everyone bring a bag lunch (we'll provide drinks and dessert); come with bikes, strollers, or just come to walk if you want! Everyone is welcome – all ages and abilities! Feel free to invite friends and neighbors too. Please contact Grant or Erin Holbrook for more information or to RSVP if you plan on joining in the fun: holbrookgh@gmail.com or echolbrook@gmail.com.



**Oct.
4**

Fellowship Hall

MEN'S MONTHLY DINNER

Join the men of Third for this monthly dinner together in the Fellowship Hall from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. More info on this gathering on page 6.

Sign up today: thirdrva.org/news-events/mens-monthly-dinner



**Oct.
8-11**

600 Forest Ave.

CARITAS

Each year, we host several families from CARITAS for a week in our church building. As a community, we provide them meals, shelter, laundry, and community.

Volunteers are still needed! Sign up today: thirdrva.org/news-events/caritas-at-third-church



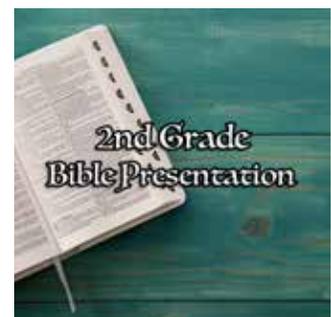
**Oct.
23**

Fellowship Hall

2nd GRADE BIBLE DINNER

Third's second grade students and their families are invited to attend the annual 2nd Grade Bible Presentation and Dinner on Sunday, October 23 at 5:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

RSVP to Tracie Meadows (traciem@thirdrva.org) by October 18.



FALL CALENDAR

Oct.

29

Fellowship Hall

BEHIND THE HEADLINES: What is Going On Within Islam?

Join us on October 29 at 6:30 p.m. to worship together and hear from Sasan Tavassoli, a former Shi'ite Muslim from Iran, about engaging Christians for effective witness to Muslims in Iran.



Nov.

1

Fellowship Hall

MEN'S MONTHLY DINNER

Join the men of Third for this monthly dinner together in the Fellowship Hall from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. More info on this gathering on page 6.

Sign up today: thirdrva.org/news-events/mens-monthly-dinner-1



Nov.

4-5

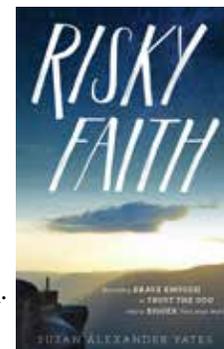
Fellowship Hall

ANNUAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE: Risky Faith

Mark your calendars and plan to attend! Our annual women's conference is a great way to grow closer to God and to each other.

Friday evening: 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Saturday morning: 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 in the Fellowship Hall



Sign up at thirdrva.org/events. **Questions?** Contact Lauren Luck at lauren.luck@gmail.com.

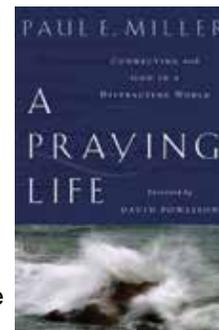
Nov.

19

Fellowship Hall

A PRAYING LIFE: A Seminar with Paul Miller

We are excited to welcome Paul Miller to Third in November! Paul wrote the book *A Praying Life: Connecting with God in a Distracting World*. He'll be with us for the weekend of November 18-20, and will teach a seminar based on his book.



Miller is a well-known writer and speaker on prayer. In his seminar, he will not only establish a foundation for prayer, but give you practical steps to live every day in complete dependence on the Father. We as a church want to be a community marked by prayer, and this is a great place to start.

WHEN: November 19, 8:15 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

WHERE: Fellowship Hall

WHO: Anyone! Invite friends and family.

COST: \$29, includes participant's manual and prayer cards

Sign up today at thirdrva.org/events. **Questions?** Contact Tom Barila at tomb@thirdrva.org.

Third Church
500 Forest Avenue
Richmond, Virginia 23229
804.282.4645

QUEEN OF KATWE

DISNEY PREMIERE SEPTEMBER 23



Did you know that Third Church hosted the “Queen of Katwe,” Phiona Mutesi from Katwe, Uganda, in November of 2012?

It's true! In addition to speaking at Third, she spoke at The Steward School, Veritas school, Church Hill Academy, and the Elijah House Academy.

For many years, Third has faithfully supported [Sports Outreach Institute](#) as one of our missions partners. Phiona, a child from the Ugandan slum of Katwe, was "discovered" by SOI and has blossomed into a chess prodigy under the indigenous leadership of Sports Outreach. Phiona became a national African chess champion at the age of 16. The story was picked up by an ESPN sports writer (Tim Crothers) who won awards for capturing the story. Tim expanded the article and wrote a book entitled *Queen of Katwe*. And now 4 years later, Walt Disney has released a major motion picture about the story.

The film, starring Golden Globe nominee David Oyelowo, Oscar winner Lupita Nyong’o, and newcomer Madina Nalwanga, is directed by Mira Nair and was released on September 23.

We encourage you to support this film, watch the trailer, and read more about Phiona's story: queenofkatwe.com.