



Jesus constantly tells stories. He tells stories about basic things of life that everyone could relate to: stories about farming, sowing seed, detecting weeds, reaping a harvest, paying wages, fishing, building, managing estates, judging in the law court, and so on. He tells stories about men and women, children, the poor and the rich, the outcast and the powerful. He tells real-life stories from the language of the people, things that everyone could immediately relate to.

What all of these stories have in common is that they have a double meaning. Parables are stories with two different levels of meaning. They are pointing to something. Jesus wants us to look beyond the story or event in order to see a greater story...the story about God and His kingdom, and the way His kingdom works in the world. Parables are like signposts pointing to a destination that is farther and greater than the signpost itself.

Why did Jesus tell stories?

Over a third of Jesus' teaching is in parables. The disciples asked him once, "Why are you talking in parables all the time?" Jesus responded in Mark 4:11-12. He told them, "The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables so that, 'they may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding; otherwise they might turn and be forgiven!'"

What does this mean? The Jewish people were anticipating a Messiah King for a very long time. When Jesus showed up he was a very different kind of king than they were expecting. They wanted a king who would come with power, drive out the Romans, establish the kingdom of Israel and exalt them in power. But Jesus was not that kind of a King. As Jesus told these parables, he was offering an invitation to a different kind of Kingdom. He was inviting them to become a part of the Kingdom he was establishing and it was an altogether different kind of a kingdom than they had ever seen or experienced.

In this Kingdom the humble are lifted up and the poor are exalted, while the proud and the lofty are brought

[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)

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

**THIRD PRESS DEADLINE FOR  
September:** Friday, August 12  
Submit to: [beccap@thirdrva.org](mailto:beccap@thirdrva.org)

low. In this Kingdom, insiders in this world are made outsiders, and outsiders are brought in. The wandering are sought out, the hungry are fed, the lost are found. In this Kingdom, God’s love is showered on those who are totally undeserving, while those who think they are deserving are shut out.

Jesus is giving a radical new interpretation of how God is working in the world. As people heard these stories, they were shocked awake to the new reality of God’s Kingdom in Jesus. In response, they were either brought to their senses and became a part of this new adventure, or their hearts were hardened and they refused to believe that this new story that Jesus was telling could possibly be true.

The same is true for us. These parables are not nice little bedtime stories with good morals at the end. They are meant to shock us and shake us awake out of our apathy and out of our boredom. They are meant to remind us that the Christian life is not just about coming to church on Sundays and reading your Bible and being a good moral person. Instead, the stories of Jesus teach us that the Christian life is about a secret, revolutionary movement of God in the world, and they are an invitation to every one of us to become a part of that movement.

From August 7 through September 4, we’ll be looking at five parables from the Gospel of Luke. The stories are an invitation to discover what God’s Kingdom is like and to become a part of it.

You are invited.

Grace and peace of our Savior+

Corey Widmer

The Gospel of Luke: Stories of the King			
Date	Topic	Scripture	Preacher
August 7	<i>The Story of the Great Banquet</i>	Luke 14:12-24	Corey Widmer
August 14	<i>The Story of the Mustard Seed</i>	Luke 13:18-21	Corey Widmer
August 21	<i>The Story of the Lost Things</i>	Luke 15: 1-10	Corey Widmer
August 28	<i>The Story of the Four Soils</i>	Luke 8: 4-15	Tim Latham
Sept. 4	<i>The Story of the Lost Sons</i>	Luke 15:11-32	Corey Widmer

# MID-YEAR UPDATE

## THIRD CHURCH 2016 OPERATING BUDGET

*"God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Jesus Christ."*  
Philippians 4:19

With hearts full of joy and gratitude, we bring you a mid-year report of God's faithfulness and provision for Third Church, demonstrated in your generosity during the first half of this year! Through the period ending June 30, the income of the church is greater than the budgeted amount and the expenses are less than those budgeted. The leadership of Third senses God's loving faithfulness in the finances of the church and longs for you to know it also. In the paragraphs that follow there are caveats to both the income and expense financial positions at mid-year, but nothing diminishes the grace received in the first 6 months of the year!

And our rejoicing is not predicated on just this financial grace, but on the Kingdom work it will accomplish. Your generosity places Third in a position to meet the challenges we set for ourselves last fall as we looked forward to 2016 and we saw God was on the move; knew he had prepared the way; and invited all those with willing hearts to join us in eagerly following.

The challenges were:

- To send greater support to our international mission partners: the 2016 budget reflects this!
- To take on new ministry initiatives: Jobs for Life and ADHD family ministry are happening!
- To sustain Third's ministry and growth with adequate staff: long-awaited Mission Pastor is hired!

We continue to seek God's leading in our ministries, our finances, our growth and our community.

Before we look at the mid-year numbers, here is a reminder about how Third's budget is developed. The historical trends in monthly giving (that follow a somewhat predictable pattern during the calendar year) are considered. To the extent possible, spending budgets are adjusted to align with the historical giving pattern, but in certain expense areas (i.e., personnel costs) the costs develop more evenly over the course of the year. As such, it is not unusual for Third Church to operate in an operating loss position for much of the year, given that monthly giving is more heavily concentrated in the last few months of the year. The details on the budget follow.

Through April 30 of this year, the offering income exceeded the budgeted amount by a total of \$57,500. This was a great encouragement as we watched the hearts of God's people respond to his generous grace to us through Christ. In May and June our offering income was less than the amounts budgeted for those months, but through June 30, offering income of \$1,332,000 remains ahead of budgeted giving by \$8,300.

Through June 30 of this year, Third's expenditures of \$1,410,000 were \$159,750 less than budget. While this gives us some cushion as we enter the summer months (when giving is historically less than the required amount to cover Third's expenses), we know this budgeted money is committed for mission and for major maintenance items and it will be spent. Still, we are very grateful to enter summer in this positive cash flow position!

We invite you to continue in your faithful giving through the second half of the year. Most importantly, join us in praising God for meeting our financial needs, just as he meets ALL our needs according to the riches of his glory in Jesus Christ!

## WELCOME LAURIE "LJ" JAWORSKI TO THIRD!



Laurie Jaworski, better known as LJ, is joining the Third Family on August 15, serving as the Mission Pastor. We couldn't be more excited to welcome LJ to Third, and for her vast skills, wisdom, and passion to be used to equip and send our people as missionaries into our neighborhoods, city, and throughout the world.

LJ was born and raised in North Branford, Connecticut and moved to California in 1990 to serve with Youth With A Mission (YWAM). She attended Fuller Seminary, where she graduated with a Masters of Arts in Intercultural Studies with a concentration in Leadership Development. Since graduation, LJ has served in four churches in California in many roles, including Mission Department Director, Leader, Strategist and Educator. She comes to us most recently from serving at Trinity United Presbyterian in Santa Ana.

In the last 20+ years she has trained short-term teams, lectured on World Mission at Christian universities, led various international short-term mission trips, developed vibrant mission ministries in local churches and partnered with mobilization ministries. Her seminary research and passion is in the area of strategy for mobilization of the Church – helping congregations embrace the charge to be World Christians.

At Third, LJ will be responsible for equipping and mobilizing the people of Third to engage in the work of mission locally and globally. She will be tasked with recruiting and leading the Mission Committee, and motivating, training, and mobilizing the congregation in personal missional engagement. She will also be the primary contact for connecting with and supporting mission partners.

When she's not catalyzing groups of believers to missions, LJ loves home decorating, old black and white movies from the 40's, and the beach. She's got an old cat named Mordecai, and finds much joy in mission history and historical research.

We are blessed that the Lord has called her to serve with us! As LJ makes the transition from lovely California to our (hot and humid!) Richmond summer, please welcome her and make her feel at home at Third.

# JOHN ROSEMOND PARENTING SEMINARS

We're excited to be partnering with Hunter Country Day School to bring renowned speaker and parenting coach John Rosemond to Third for two special workshops. John will offer time-proven parenting principles along with practical help. John has authored many books, including *The Well-Behaved Child: Discipline That Really Works!*, *Parenting by The Book: Biblical Wisdom for Raising Your Child*, and *Teen-Proofing: Fostering Responsible Decision Making in Your Teenager*.

For more information on John Rosemond, visit his website: [www.rosemond.com](http://www.rosemond.com).

## **The Ten Biggest Mistakes Parents Make (and How to Stop Making Them):**

- Sunday, August 21, 2:00 - 5:30 p.m., Fellowship Hall

## **Understanding and Leading Your Teen:**

- Monday, August 22, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m., Fellowship Hall

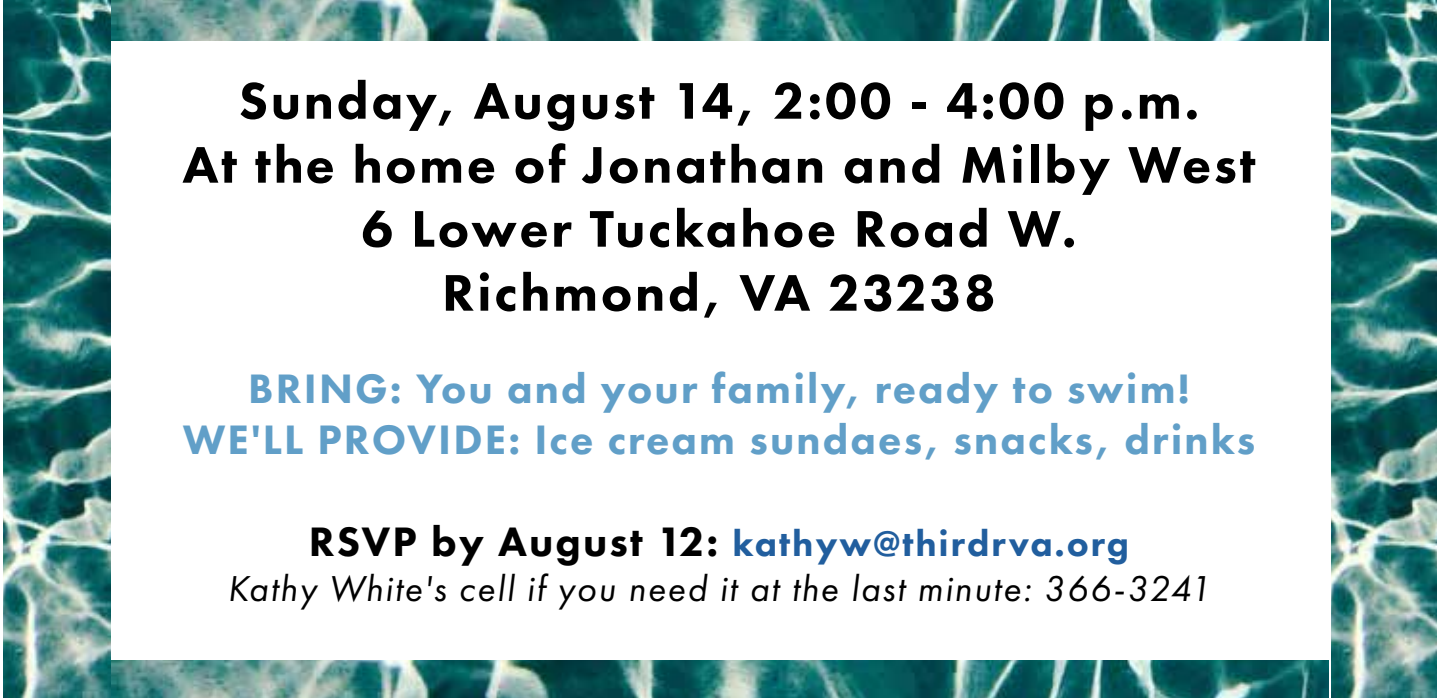
**Cost:** \$20 per person

**Register here:** [thirdrva.org/events](http://thirdrva.org/events)

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# MOSAIC POOL PARTY

Mosaic Ministry exists to support families with children who have special needs. We provide fellowship opportunities, special speakers, a Bible study, summer program scholarships, buddies for children in Sunday school, ways to connect parents who have children with similar special needs...and are open to new ways to offer support! If you would like more information about Mosaic, contact our staff liaison, Kathy White, at [kathyw@thirdrva.org](mailto:kathyw@thirdrva.org).



**Sunday, August 14, 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.**  
**At the home of Jonathan and Milby West**  
**6 Lower Tuckahoe Road W.**  
**Richmond, VA 23238**

**BRING: You and your family, ready to swim!**  
**WE'LL PROVIDE: Ice cream sundaes, snacks, drinks**

**RSVP by August 12: [kathyw@thirdrva.org](mailto:kathyw@thirdrva.org)**  
*Kathy White's cell if you need it at the last minute: 366-3241*



**JOBS** *for* **LIFE**™  
Restoring dignity. Changing lives. Transforming communities.

## **How to "One Another" One Another in Jobs for Life**

*A Reflection from Ginger James*

It is not hard to extol the virtues of the Jobs for Life program. The most common description is as follows: Jobs for Life is a "biblically-based job readiness program that teaches professional soft skills, resumes and interview techniques." Or, Jobs for Life is "a discipleship platform to help underserved men and women find jobs and experience life in Christ."

Both of these descriptions highlight the core purpose of the JFL program but the truth is, the real virtue of the program is relational...it lives out the "How to 'One Another' One Another" sermon series that Third is digging deep into this summer.

Each week, the One Another theme correlates with Jobs for Life: Living in Harmony with One Another, Confessing Your Sins to One Another, Forgiving One Another, Showing Hospitality to One Another, and so on. JFL is truly the foundation of being relational in a way that can seem messy and yet is so rewarding.

The greatest joy is when something that you never imagined was happening is revealed so unexpectedly...such as when a recent JFL graduate spoke these words at the June 8th graduation:

"Thank you."

Pause.

"Thank you."

Pause.

"Two little words that we use every day but it is the best way to tell you how I feel. All my life, everywhere I have gone, I have been invisible. But not in Jobs for Life."

Could there be any better way to "one another," one another?

If you want to live out this summer's sermon series, then you want to be a part of this Fall Semester of Jobs for Life. For more information, contact Ginger James at (804) 647-5348 or [gingerjames1@icloud.com](mailto:gingerjames1@icloud.com).

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## **Jobs for Life is a 12-week, relationship-centered jobs training program.**

Each student is teamed with a Champion who walks with them through the class and the months following, as they journey from unemployment or underemployment to better employment. Our teachers interact closely with students, providing practical job training within a framework of God's good design for work.

**Interested in getting involved? There's a role for everyone.**

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## **WHEN & WHERE:**

Monday Nights, September 12 through December 5  
6:00 - 8:30 PM | Fellowship Hall



## **HOW CAN YOU HELP:**



### **CHAMPION**

Walk alongside a student as a mentor throughout the 12 weeks of the class.



### **BUSINESS LEADER**

Join one of the many opportunities to serve by sharing expertise or financially supporting the class.



### **MEALS**

Meals are an important part of each class. Volunteer to cook and serve meals to the class.



### **CHILDCARE**

Volunteer to provide childcare services for the children of students during class.



### **TEACHERS**

Facilitate our Jobs For Life curriculum as a teacher.



### **RECRUITERS**

Know someone who'd benefit from the class? Invite them to apply to join Jobs For Life.



## **READY TO SIGN UP?** Our next class starts in September, and we're actively recruiting volunteers and support now. Get in touch with Ginger James to learn more or sign up: [gingerjames1@icloud.com](mailto:gingerjames1@icloud.com) or (804) 647-5348.

# ANNUAL BACKPACK DRIVE:

A COLLABORATION BETWEEN THIRD CHURCH AND THE CHRISTIAN ARABIC CHURCH

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**We're coordinating a collection of backpacks with the Christian Arabic Church for the immigrant and refugee families they serve!** This is an annual event that takes place during August before school is back in session, and this year will culminate with a celebratory picnic with our CAC friends.

The Christian Arabic Church uses these backpacks as an outreach tool, giving them to new immigrant families in the area. Be a blessing to our community and give a backpack to help families who live right in our area.

If you'd like to donate a backpack, please fill it with any of the school supplies below:

- Notebook paper
- Spiral notebooks (1 subject)
- Pencil sharpeners
- Crayons
- Binders
- Rulers
- Math flashcards
- Writing instruments (pens, pencils, highlighters, markers)

**On Saturday, August 20, we'll have a picnic from 5:00-7:00 p.m. at the Pump Road pavilion (2340 Pump Road, 23233) to celebrate the collection of backpacks for area immigrants.** The main dish (chicken) and drinks will be provided. Third attendees are asked to bring side dishes, and CAC attendees will bring desserts.

You can bring your backpack to the picnic to donate it, or you can drop it by the Fellowship Hall on Sundays in August, by August 21.

**To sign up to join us at the picnic, visit: [thirdrva.org/events](http://thirdrva.org/events)**

**Questions?** Contact Kathy White at [kathyw@thirdrva.org](mailto:kathyw@thirdrva.org) or call the church office, 282-4645.

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## NEWCOMERS MINISTRY

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**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:

- **Sunday morning:** September 11, 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.
- **Friday evening:** September 16, 6-9 p.m. with dinner
- **Saturday afternoon:** September 17, 1:00 - 4:30 p.m.
- **Sunday morning:** September 25, joining services for those deciding to become members

To sign up, register online at [www.thirdrva.org/newcomers](http://www.thirdrva.org/newcomers) 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.

## DINNER 8s - Back for Fall 2016!

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

Sign up for Dinner 8s. You'll be placed in a supper group that meets monthly from September through December. Dinners are in one another's homes or at a restaurant.

To sign up, fill out one of the forms found around the church, or visit [thirdrva.org/registrations](http://thirdrva.org/registrations).

**Questions?** Contact Allene Brown at [allenedbrown@gmail.com](mailto:allenedbrown@gmail.com) or 441-1668.



## SAVE THE DATE: CLUB 56 DINNER

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Parents and rising 5th and 6th graders! Save the date for the annual Club 56 kickoff dinner:

**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14  
6:30PM | FELLOWSHIP HALL**

This dinner will introduce students and their families to the ministry of Club 56 and will kick off our Wednesday night activities for 5th and 6th grade students!

**Please RSVP** to Andrea Woie, [andrew@thirdrva.org](mailto:andrew@thirdrva.org), no later than September 7.



# AUGUST CALENDAR

In August, we observe a sabbath from many of our programs and classes. We hope you enjoy this time as an opportunity to be intentionally quiet and still before we kick off fall events and ministry opportunities.

**August**

**20**

5:00 p.m.  
Pump Road  
Pavilion

## CAC BACKPACK DRIVE & CELEBRATION PICNIC

We're coordinating a collection of backpacks with the Christian Arabic Church for the immigrant and refugee families they serve!

For more info, see page 8.

Register for the picnic by August 17: [thirdrva.org/events](http://thirdrva.org/events)



BACKPACK DRIVE

**August**  
**21-22**

Fellowship Hall

## JOHN ROSEMOND PARENTING WORKSHOPS

We're excited to be partnering with Hunter Country Day School to bring renowned speaker and parenting coach John Rosemond to Third for two special workshops.

More info on page 5.

Register (\$20 per person) here: [thirdrva.org/events](http://thirdrva.org/events)

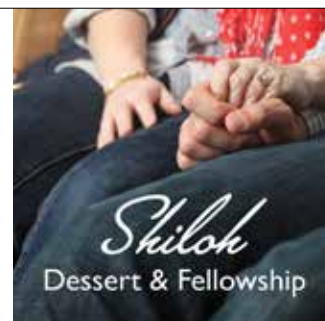
**August**  
**29**

7:00 p.m.  
Caroline Hutton's  
home

## SHILOH: Dessert & Fellowship

Shiloh is a ministry at Third that provides support for those grieving the loss of their unborn child or longing for a child yet to be conceived. Women are invited to this evening of dessert, prayer, and fellowship.

For more info and to RSVP, please contact Charlotte Gage at [charlotte.jean.gage@gmail.com](mailto:charlotte.jean.gage@gmail.com)



**August**  
**29**

6:00 - 8:30 p.m.  
Pump Road  
pavilion

## MEN'S ANNUAL \$5 STEAK NIGHT

Join the men of Third for our annual \$5 Steak Night event, and the official kickoff of our fall season of men's ministry! We'll meet at the Pump Road Pavilion: 2340 Pump Road, 23233.

If you've never been to a men's ministry event before, this is a great place to start.

Register: [thirdrva.org/events](http://thirdrva.org/events)



MEN'S ANNUAL  
STEAK NIGHT

**August**  
**31**

7:00 - 9:00 p.m.  
Fellowship Hall

## EVENING OF PRAYER & PRAISE

Join us for this special, informal time to pray and worship together. All are invited to the Fellowship Hall for this evening of prayer and praise.



# SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

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**Sept.  
11**

600 Forest Ave

## **KICKOFF: Sunday Morning Discipleship Classes**

Be on the lookout for the full lineup of classes and offerings in the coming month. If you've never checked out a Sunday morning discipleship class before, now's a great time to start!

## **KICKOFF: "Explore God" Sermon Series**

Beginning Sunday, September 11, we'll be partnering with local churches and ministries to implement a city-wide community outreach program that invites the community to come and explore God in local churches over a 7-week period.

Our sermon series will anchor the discussions, but we'll also have special discussion groups for youth, small groups, and adult Sunday morning discipleship classes. Look for more info soon!

**If you'd like to know more**, or want to get involved with the Explore God discussion groups, contact Tom Barila, [tomb@thirdrva.org](mailto:tomb@thirdrva.org) or 282-4645.



**Sept.  
14**

600 Forest Ave

## **KICKOFF: Wednesday Night Reconnect**

Our Wednesday evening programming, including classes, worship, and fellowship, will kick-off on Wednesday, September 14. Look for the full list of opportunities in the coming month.

**Tutoring for the Arabic-speaking children will kickoff on September 21.**

**Sept.  
23-25**

## **SAVE THE DATE: The Makers Series featuring Sandra McCracken**

We're excited to be bringing singer/songwriter Sandra McCracken to Richmond for a weekend of events, including a Friday night Makers Series panel. The theme for this weekend is *steward*, as we explore what it means to be entrusted by the Creator to look after, and care for, each other and our Father's creation.

From her website: Sandra "specializes in modern-day gospel songs. Her lyrics seamlessly combine the sacred poetry of old hymns with compelling personal confessions and narratives. Largely inspired from the folk tradition, Sandra's songs and hymn adaptations are sung in churches, conferences and schools nationwide."



Save the date for this special weekend of stirring artistry and musicianship.

Third Church  
500 Forest Avenue  
Richmond, Virginia 23229  
804.282.4645

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# VBS RECAP: Go for Gold!

During the last week of June, 250 children and over 130 volunteers gathered for a week of Bible exploration, crafts, and fun at the *More Than Gold* Vacation Bible School! This Olympic-themed VBS was written by members of Third Church and focused on teaching 5 character traits to the children. We featured men and women from the Bible to help illustrate trust in God, endurance, focus, teachability, and commitment.

During VBS, the children bring in their offering money to support a special project. This year, we chose to build a library for the Anura School in Niger, West Africa. This school was started by World Horizons as an expansion of literacy programs and now provides a quality Christian education to over 400 students. We set a starting goal of \$6000 to purchase books for a library, including Bibles and Christian storybooks in French. **These generous children brought in over \$8500 to support this project!** We heard great stories of bake sales, lemonade stands, and even a car wash to raise money. We all look forward to hearing updates from the school in the future and seeing how they used this money to “run their race” and get a great education!

