

LET
HEAVEN AND NATURE
SING

Sunday | December 23, 2018

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING

"Love came down at Christmas;
Love all lovely, love divine;
Love was born at Christmas,
Stars and angels gave the sign."

Christina Rossetti

Third CHURCH

*Called together for the renewal
of all things through Jesus Christ.*

Welcome!

¡Bienvenido!

欢迎!

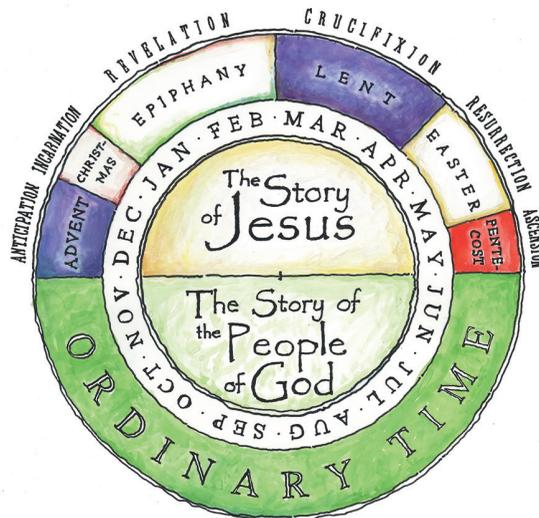
مرحباً

Добро пожаловать!

We're glad you've chosen to worship at Third!
We look forward to meeting and getting to know you.

Sanctuary Decorations

Since the days of the early church, followers of Jesus have been invited to “tell time differently” with a calendar shaped by the story of God’s works of salvation and renewal. At Third Church we draw on that tradition not only by marking the seasons of the Christian year through the readings and music in our Sunday services, but also by using colors and textures to enrich our physical space and experience of worship.



The liturgical year starts with the season of Advent, when we begin a four-week vigil waiting for the arrival of Jesus, the Messiah, into our hurting world. The purple banners, Advent wreath and window candles, and twig and evergreen decorations now adorning our Sanctuary reflect this season of longing for new life, and help us prepare to celebrate Christmas all the more. The gold and white “chrismon” tree at the front of the Sanctuary features decorations made by earlier generations of Third members which represent the many names and symbols for Jesus used by the Church through the centuries. As we progress through this month-long season, we’ll light a new candle on the Advent wreath each week and add new greenery and other markers of God’s in-breaking love. On Christmas Eve we’ll replace the purple with banners and decorations in white and gold that will carry us into the New Year and to Epiphany.

Adorning the Sanctuary is the work of a multi-generational team of people from 16 to 65, and if you’re interested in being part of that effort, or would just like more information, please contact Holly Smith at hhovelsonsmith@gmail.com.

PRAISE

God gathers us all and calls us by his grace.

Prelude

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”
(Kenneth Varner)

Jeff Hummel

Welcome and Announcements

Preparation for Worship

John 1:1–5; 14

Leader: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.

**People: Through him all things were made;
without him nothing was made that has been made.**

Leader: In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.

**Everyone: The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness has not overcome it.**

Silent Preparation for Worship

Let's quiet our hearts in silent preparation for worship.

PRAISE

Call to Worship

“We Are Here, God Is Here”
(Pepper Choplin)

Choir / Churchestra

We are here. God is here. There’s a holy presence in this place.
Feel the Spirit, feel the power. See the light of glory, truth and grace.
Come, O come, Emmanuel, for you are God with us.
Come, O come, Emmanuel, for you are the Christ, the source of life and love.

We are here. God is here. There’s a holy presence in this place.
Feel the Spirit, feel the power. See the light of glory, truth and grace.
We’re praying, “Come, O come, Emmanuel, for you are God with us.
Come, O come, Emmanuel, for you are the Christ, the source of life and love.”

In the beginning there was the Word, who came to earth to walk among us.
The Word was God and was with God. In him was life and the light has come to shine.
Come and shine through the darkness of the world.
Come and shine through the darkness; through the darkness, shine.

We are here together now. You are here, Emmanuel, as we gather in this holy place.
You are the Word. You are the Light. You are full of glory, truth and grace.
Send your glory, send your truth, send your grace
As we come to worship in this place.

Prayer of Adoration

† **Song of Praise**

“Creator of the Stars of Night”

(Music on page 6)

† *The cross indicates standing, as you are able.*

CREATOR OF THE STARS OF NIGHT



1. Cre - a - tor of _____ the stars of night, _____ thy peo - ple's ev - er -
2. When this old world _____ drew on toward night, _____ you came, but not in



last - ing light, _____ O _____ Christ, Re - deem - er of us all, _____
splen - dor bright; _____ not _____ as a mon - arch, but the child



_____ we pray you hear us when _____ we call. _____
_____ of Ma - ry, blame - less moth - er mild. _____



Come, oh _____ come, Come, oh _____ come,



Come, oh _____ come to us. _____

EXPECTATION

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 40:3–5

- ³ A voice of one calling:
“In the wilderness prepare
the way for the Lord;
make straight in the desert
a highway for our God.
- ⁴ Every valley shall be raised up,
every mountain and hill made low;
the rough ground shall become level,
the rugged places a plain.
- ⁵ And the glory of the Lord will be revealed,
and all people will see it together.
For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”

Musical Response

“Prepare the Way of the Lord!”
(Lloyd Larson)

Choir / Churchestra

A voice cries out, “Prepare the way! Prepare the way of the Lord!”
The prophet cries out, “Prepare the way! Prepare the way of the Lord!”
Every valley shall be lifted up; every mountain and hill made low.
Every crooked path shall be made straight, and the rough places plain.
The glory of the Lord shall be revealed.

A voice cries out, “Prepare the way! Prepare the way of the Lord!”
The prophet cries out, “Prepare the way! Prepare the way of the Lord!”
“So comfort, comfort my people,” says the Lord God who reigns on high.
To Jerusalem say, “Your night is gone, for the Lord has heard your cry.”
Prepare the way of the Lord.

A voice cries out, “Prepare the way! Prepare the way of the Lord!”
The prophet cries out, “Prepare the way! Prepare the way of the Lord!”

PROCLAIMING

God speaks to us through his word.

Choral Proclamation “The World Awaits Your Coming” Choir / Churchestra
(Pepper Choplin)

The world is yearning for your peace; we pray for hate and war to cease.
Lord, come and teach your peaceful way, for all the world is waiting for the day
When every conflict and divide you'll come to judge and will decide.
Then nations will lay down their swords and they will train for fighting no more.
We'll train to fight no more.

The world awaits your coming, the world awaits the day.
We hear the prophet calling, “Come prepare the way!”
The world awaits your coming, when heaven's work is done.
So hear the people calling, “Now let your kingdom come!”

Let earth receive the glorious peace. Blessed salvation he will bring.
His throne is fixed in heaven above and he will reign with justice and with love.
He'll reign with justice and love.

The world awaits your coming, the world awaits the day.
We hear the prophet calling, “Come prepare the way!”
The world awaits your coming, when heaven's work is done.
So hear the people calling, “Now let your kingdom come!”

PROCLAIMING

God speaks to us through his word.

Scripture Reading

Luke 2:8–14

⁸ And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God!

RESPONDING

We respond to God's word.

† **Hymn of Response** "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" #80 in the Hymnal

Urbana Team Commissioning (11:15 service only)

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

Now gathering our prayers into one, let us boldly pray as our Savior has taught us:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever. Amen.

Prayer Needs

For Health

Elva White, Milton Jones, Stephen McCray, Zach James, Strick Smith, Nancy Bonsack, Betty Cox, Dru Fitch, Brad Bishop, Julie Walden, Charles Ellison, Lou Hanscom

For comfort for those who have lost loved ones

Frannie Nance (grandfather, 11/16), Patty Ramsey (husband, Jerry, 10/25), Valerie Holland (brother, 10/8), Patrice Foster (mother, 10/4), Frank Flanary and Andrea Woie (mother, grandmother, 10/2), Stepha Phillips (mother, 9/22), Merle James (mother, 9/16)

For Metro Richmond

We pray for the families of metropolitan Richmond: for an end to child abuse; for healthy relationships between children and their caregivers; for families going through divorce; and for all in the midst of life transitions.

SENDING

God sends us into the world as his witnesses.

† **Hymn of Commission** “Angels, From the Realms of Glory” #81 in the Hymnal

† **Commission and Benediction** Romans 5:1–5

Leader: Since we have been justified through faith,
we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
through whom we have gained access by faith
into this grace in which we now stand.

People: And we boast in the hope of the glory of God.

Leader: Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings,
because we know that suffering produces perseverance;
perseverance, character; and character, hope.

**People: And hope does not put us to shame,
because God’s love has been poured out
into our hearts through the Holy Spirit,
who has been given to us.**

† **Choral Benediction** “Hallelujah” from *Messiah* Team / Choir

Congregation members are invited to join the choir to sing the Hallelujah chorus together.

† **Postlude** “Festive Gloria” Jeff Hummel
(11:15 service only) (Aaron David Miller)

POINSETTIAS CONTRIBUTED BY

- Carolyn Oakley, in memory of her mother, Margaret Cunov.
- Rick and Sue Hendrickson, in memory of loved ones.
- Agnes Smith, to the glory of God and in loving memory of her husband Doug.
- Sarah Winfield, in loving memory of her parents, Jean and Bob Winfield.
- Liz and Jim Slate, in memory of loved ones.
- Liz and Jim Slate, in celebration of our families.
- Marlene and Gary Short, in memory of Steve Keister, Marlene's brother, and Alpha Fess, Marlene's mother and Martha Short, Gary's mother.
- In loving memory of Jamie Robertson by his family: John, Fran and Tommy Robertson and Carly Golliday Robertson.
- Debby Kay, in memory of her mother and father, Constance and Robert Kay.
- Lauralee and Will Allen, in memory of our fathers Ted Allen and Braxton Glasgow.
- Kathy and Randall White, in honor of Elva White and in memory of Lorraine Joseph and Nancy Hopke.
- Bruce and Janet Kay, in memory of loved ones.
- Lois and Malcolm Myers, in memory of our parents Mr. and Mrs. Madison Myers and Mr. and Mrs. Francis Schaffner.
- Lois and Malcolm Myers, in memory of Patricia V. Myers.
- Kathy and Jimey Ames, to the glory of God.
- David Howard, Jessica Howard, and Jamie Howard Mijeski in loving memory of Mary Howard.

Tomorrow! Christmas Eve Services at Third – Monday, December 24

Invite your family, friends, and neighbors to celebrate Christmas Eve at one of our five services: 4:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall (shorter service, suitable for our littlest ones), and 4:00, 6:00, 8:00, and 10:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary (where all ages are also welcome!). Childcare available for 3 years old and younger during the 4:00 and 6:00 p.m. services.

Important Sunday morning schedule changes – Sunday, December 30

On Sunday, December 30, we will have only two services at 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary, with time for fellowship in between. Sunday school classes will not meet, but childcare will be available for kindergarten and younger in both services.

Newcomers Class – Begins Sunday, January 13

Our Newcomers Class is an opportunity to go deep into Third's vision for worship, discipleship, community, and outreach. At the end of the class, you can choose to become a covenant partner of the church. Class meets Sunday morning (January 13) then again the next weekend (Friday evening, January 18 and Saturday afternoon, January 19). For more info and to sign up, visit thirdrva.org/events.

Guided Tour of the Bible – Kicks off again January 10 with the Poets!

This 5-week study digs into one section of the Bible, looking at a different book each week. We read on our own in between classes, then come together to explore things we want to know more about, and learn from each other. Ed Satterfield authored the Tour and leads our time. Our next study begins Thursday night, January 10 and will focus on the Poets (Job through Proverbs). More info and to sign up: thirdrva.org/events.

End of Year Giving – Important Dates

If you're considering an end-of-year gift to Third, here's how to make sure your gift is reflected on the 2018 year-end giving statements: 1) Hand deliver to the church office no later than 3:30 p.m. Friday, December 28 or drop in the offering plate on Sunday, December 30. 2) Mail with postmark date of 2018. 3) Give online (thirdrva.org/give) before midnight, Monday, December 31. Questions? Contact Lynley Steadman: lynleys@thirdrva.org.

Pray for Our Urbana Team!

Today we commission our Urbana team, as they head to St. Louis from December 26–31. Please pray for their travel, the impact of the conference, the gatherings and the 13 people going from Third and the Christian Arabic Church: LJ Jaworski; Andy Burgess; Scott, JoAnn, Seth and Noah Armistead; Bisola Olowe; Davis and Mary-Dryden Maio; Rojina, Baher and Steven Rezk; and Mark Farag.

Dessert Gathering with Mission Partner Carolyn Rennie Tuesday, January 8, 6:30 p.m.

Carolyn Rennie will be giving an update on her ministry in Romania. Join us at LJ's house to meet Carolyn and hear more. Please contact Rebecca Hatton with any questions: rebeccah@thirdrva.org.

SUNDAY ADULT DISCIPLESHIP CLASSES

During December, most of our adult Sunday school classes are taking a break. However, there is one class that you can drop into this week during the 10:00 a.m. hour.

Good News Class (Room 101)

This class is focusing on Advent based on Scripture and Advent-inspired music—including some of the O Antiphons of Advent—from the Renaissance (Michael Praetorius, William Byrd) through the Baroque (J.S. Bach) and Romantic periods (Felix Mendelssohn) and all the way to the 20th century (Herbert Howells).

If you have any questions about our Sunday school classes, contact Derek Mondeau: derekm@thirdrva.org.

THIS WEEK AT THIRD

Sunday, December 23

8:45, 10:00, 11:15 a.m. Worship services – Sanctuary

Monday, December 24

All Day Christmas Eve: Church office closed

4:00 p.m. Family Christmas Eve Service – Fellowship Hall

4:00, 6:00, 8:00, 10:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Services – Sanctuary

Tuesday, December 25

All Day Christmas Day: Church office closed

Wednesday, December 26

6:30 p.m. Freedom Road – Conference Room, 500 Forest Ave.

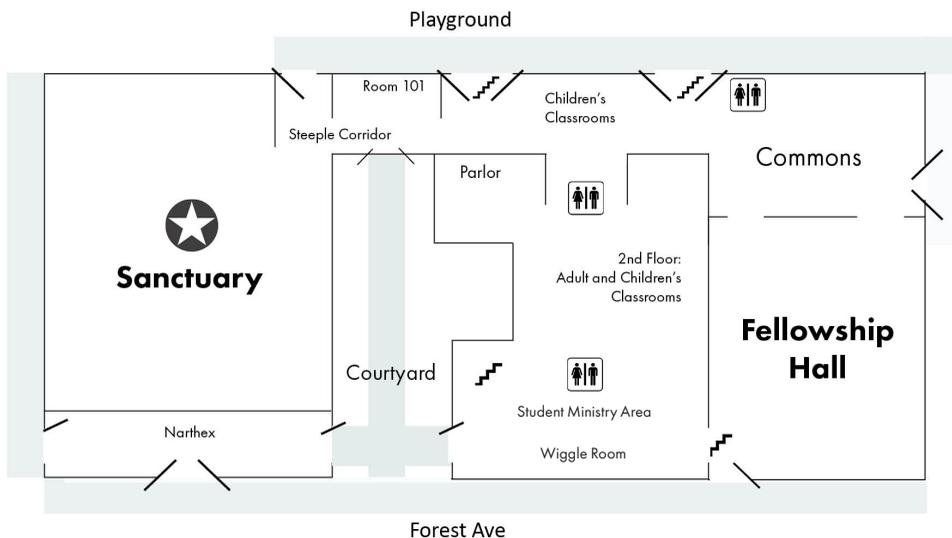
FAMILY & STUDENT MINISTRY

During 8:45 and 11:15 a.m. services: Childcare is available for all children aged Kindergarten and younger. First grade and above attend worship with their parents.

Infants, toddlers, 2 year olds	First Floor
Young 3s–Kindergarten	Second Floor

During the 10:00 service: Children are welcome to attend worship with their parents or Sunday school:

Infants, toddlers, 2 year olds	First Floor
Young 3s–4th Grade	Second Floor
5th–6th Grade (Club56)	Basement
Middle and High School	Student Ministry Area (First Floor)



Student Ministry: Sunday Night Gatherings

We will not be having our regular evening gathering tonight or next week, December 30. Students in 7th–12th grade are welcome to join us in the Fellowship Hall when our gatherings resume, beginning January 6 at 7:00 p.m. Contact Rick (rickh@thirdrva.org) or Andrea (andrewa@thirdrva.org) with questions.

2018 BUDGET UPDATE

2018 Total Annual Budget
\$3,876,808

YTD Giving Actual \$3,359,035

(difference: \$517,773)



87%

With three Sundays in December behind us, we have received \$3,359,035 on a budget of \$3,876,808. We have \$517,773 to go to fulfill our giving plan. Please consider fulfilling your giving pledge as soon as you're able or perhaps giving a little extra as God directs you—doing so would help Third reach our year-end giving goal.

If you're considering an end-of-year gift to Third, here's how to make sure your gift is reflected on the 2018 year-end giving statements: 1) Hand deliver to the church office no later than 3:30 p.m. Friday, December 28 or drop in the offering plate on Sunday, December 30. 2) Mail with postmark date of 2018. 3) Give online (thirdrva.org/give) before midnight, Monday, December 31.

A heartfelt thank you to so many for your faithful giving to Third in the last several weeks. We are excited to see how God continues to bless Third through your giving to help us meet our annual budget and position us well for next year. We are also greatly encouraged by your generous pledges for 2019 and grateful for your commitment and generosity to Third. Please contact Lynley Steadman with any questions: lynleys@thirdrva.org.

WELCOME TO THIRD

We're so glad you're here. We'd love to get to know you and for you to learn more about our community. To get started, you can visit our **website** (thirdrva.org) and sign up for our **ministry emails** (thirdrva.org/signup). You can also pick up a copy of **Third Press**, our monthly newsletter, from around the church.

SUNDAY MORNINGS AT THIRD

If you ever need help on a Sunday morning, look for individuals wearing yellow name badges. They can help answer questions, find seats, and guide you around our building. A **Wiggle Room** is available if you need to leave the service with your little one. You'll be able to watch the service via streaming. The room is across the courtyard, through the doors and to the right.

WELCOME COFFEE

If you're new to Third, join us for our next Welcome Coffee! This monthly gathering is a great opportunity to meet a few people and learn about Third's vision, what we believe, and how you can get involved. **Join us January 6 at 10:00 a.m. in the Parlor.**

JOIN A PARISH GROUP COMMUNITY

We desire everyone at Third to be known, cared for, and encouraged as a disciple of Christ, and we do this through our Parish Groups. Whether you are new or not, you are invited to a Parish Group in your area this week. No qualifications, no homework, just come. We have a place set for you.

Parish Groups meet regularly to grow in our relationship with God, build authentic community, love our actual neighbors and bless our city. Learn more and find a group meeting near you at thirdrva.org/parish-life.



500 Forest Ave Richmond, VA 23229 | thirdrva.org | [Twitter](#) [Facebook](#) [Instagram](#) @thirdrva | 804-282-4645

Third Church is a member of the ECO denomination, a Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians