

WAITING FOR THE
K I N G D O M

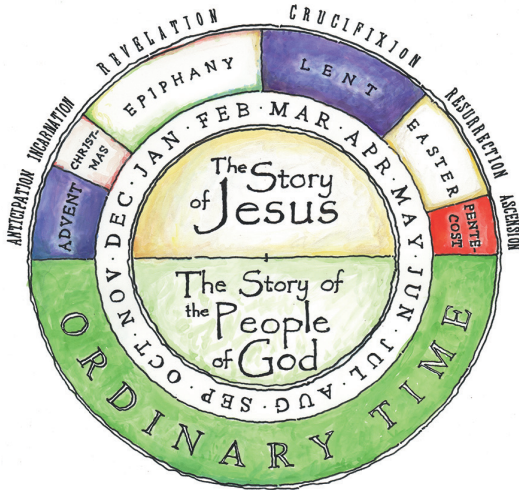
————— WAITING FOR THE KING —————
SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2019

“Jesus made clear that the Kingdom of God is organic and not organizational.
It grows like a seed and works like leaven: secretly, invisibly, surprisingly and irresistibly.”

OS GUINNESS

SANCTUARY DECORATIONS



As followers of Jesus, we “tell time differently” with a calendar shaped by the story of God’s works of salvation and renewal. Not only do we mark the seasons of the Christian year through the readings and music in our worship service, we also use colors and textures to enrich our 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.

GATHERING

God gathers us all and calls us by his grace.

Prelude

"Lift Up Your Heads, You Mighty Gates"
(Wilbur Held)

Jeff Hummel

Welcome and Announcements

Preparation for Worship

From Psalm 62:5

Leader: For you, O Lord, our souls in stillness wait;

People: **Truly our hope is in you.**

Silent Preparation for Worship

† Call to Worship

From Psalm 130:5–7

Leader: I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word I hope.
My soul waits for the Lord more than those who watch for the morning.

People: **There is no darkness with you, O Lord.**

Leader: O Israel, hope in the Lord! For with the Lord there is steadfast love,
and with him is plenteous redemption.

People: **There is no darkness with you, O Lord.**

Leader: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

People: **There is no darkness with you, O Lord.**

Prayer of Adoration

† Songs of Praise

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

#61 in the Hymnal
(Verses 1, 2, 6, 7)

"Wait for the Lord"

#480 in the Hymnal

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

CONFESSING

Prayer of Confession

Leader: O promised Christ,
we are a world at war.

People: Our peace depends on your coming.

Leader: We are a sinful people.

People: Our pardon depends on your coming.

Leader: We are full of good intentions, but weak at keeping promises.

**People: Our only hope of doing your will
is that you should come and help us do it.**

Leader: Lord Christ, Word Made Flesh,

**People: Our world waits for your peace,
for your pardon, and for your grace.
Even so, come, Lord Jesus.**

Silent Confession

Words of Comfort

Leader: The good news of this Advent season is forgiveness of sin and new life.
Let us commit our lives to Christ's way of hope and peace.

**People: Thanks be to the Advent God, who comes among us,
setting us free to love and serve.**

† Greeting of Peace

As a new spiritual family reconciled to one another through Christ, offer to one another a sign of peace: a handshake, a hug, or even just a smile. You could say something simple like "Peace be with you," or just simply, "Peace."

THANKSGIVING

Our Offerings

From 1 Chronicles 29:14

Leader: Lord, who are we that we are able to give so generously?

**People: For all things come from you
and what we now offer is already yours.**

Please pray for our mission partners Alan and Jennifer DeCerff with the Navigators, as they reach post-graduate international students at Columbia University in New York City.

Offertory (8:45 and 11:15 service)

“Creator of the Stars of Night”

Worship Team

Creator of the stars of night, thy people’s everlasting light,
Oh Christ, Redeemer of us all, we pray you hear us when we call.

Come, oh come. Come, oh come!
Come, oh come to us.

When this old world drew on toward night, you came, but not in splendor bright;
Not as a monarch, but the child of Mary, blameless mother mild.

THANKSGIVING

Offertory
(10:00 service)

“Silence to Song”
(Hogan/Martin)

Choir

Lord, we wait in silence for your song, praying for the coming of the dawn.
In the stillness of this place, we are listening for your grace.
Lord, sing your music clear and strong.

In the prophets' words we hear your theme. In the ancient scrolls we find our dream.
And across the sands of time, we can hear your voice sublime
Singing words of mercy to redeem.

Emmanuel! God with us! Our captive hearts have cried for so long.
Emmanuel! God with us! Bring music to our night, teach us how to sing your light.
Come sing our silence into song, Emmanuel!

In the distance we can hear the angels; on the near horizon there is gold.
We can hear the stars of dawn as they fill the air with song,
And share with all the coming of the Son.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall sing to thee, O Israel!
Lord, come and sing our silence into song.

† **Doxology**

***Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host: praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.***

PROCLAIMING

God speaks to us through his word.

Scripture Reading

Matthew 13:31–33

³¹ He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. ³² Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.”

³³ He told them still another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough.”

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God!

RESPONDING

† **Song of Response**

“Christ Is Coming”

Worship Team

Christ is coming! Let creation from her groans and suffering cease.
Let the glorious proclamation hope restore and faith increase.
Christ is coming! Christ is coming!
Come, thou blessed Prince of Peace. Come, thou blessed Prince of Peace.

Long thine exiles have been pining, far from rest and home and thee.
But in heav'nly vestures shining, they their loving Lord shall see.
Christ is coming! Christ is coming!
Haste the joyous jubilee. Haste the joyous jubilee.

With that blessed hope before us, let no harp remain unstrung.
Let the mighty advent chorus onward roll from tongue to tongue:
“Christ is coming! Christ is coming!
Come, Lord Jesus, quickly come! Come, Lord Jesus, quickly come!”

Prayer of the People and the Lord's Prayer

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: Terry Jones, Pam Smith, Laurie Marsden, Lynn Pendleton, Danny Yacher, Eileen Raynor, Pam Smith, Mary Ann Hancock, Brad Bishop, Noel and Stephanie Brooks, David Hacker, Julie Walden, Christie Geraty, Milton Jones

For comfort for those who have lost loved ones: Frances Eichost (11/20); Janice Allen (father, 11/12; mother, 9/28); June Keller (husband, Joe, 11/11); Chip Buehler (brother, 11/7); Wendy Rogers (father, 11/5); Lynne Hildebrand (brother, 10/27); Russ Corson, Laura Blacano (wife and grandmother, Wilma, 10/21); Cindy Cave (mother, 10/19); Arthur McCray (father, 10/11); Christine Darby (brother, 10/10)

For Metro Richmond: We pray for the families of metropolitan Richmond: for persons who are lonely or have no family; for persons who are estranged from their families; for persons who are grieving the loss of a loved one; and for all who need to feel the love of God.

SENDING

† **Song of Commission** “Soon and Very Soon” #482 in the Hymnal

† **Commission and Benediction** Hebrews 10:23–25

Leader: Let us hold fast the confession of our hope
without wavering, for he who promised is faithful;

People: Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good deeds,

Leader: Not forsaking our meeting together, as is the habit of some,

**People: But encouraging one another all the more
as we see the day drawing near.**

Postlude “People, Look East” Jeff Hummel
(11:15 service only) (Kristina Langlois)

SERVICE NOTES

Today’s flowers are given in honor of our mission partners Alan and Jennifer deCerff.

NEWS & EVENTS

Today! Lessons and Carols – 4:00 and 7:00 p.m., Sanctuary

Lessons and Carols is a special annual service that tells God's story of creation, fall, redemption, and re-creation through scripture readings and carols. We will prepare our hearts to celebrate the first coming of Jesus and to anticipate that day when he will come again. Childcare available at the 4:00 p.m. service only.

Today! Hear from our Missions Team – 12:30 p.m., Room 101

Come to this (free!) lunch to hear from our team that traveled to Thailand in November. They provided teaching for pastors serving in rural areas in closed countries and had many God-filled experiences while on the trip. No RSVP necessary.

We're hiring! Check out our job postings.

We are currently hiring for two positions: Associate Director of Family Ministry (nursery through preschool focus) and Associate Director of Parish Ministry. For full job descriptions and to apply: thirdva.org/employment.

Donate Poinsettias for the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall!

Order a red poinsettia for \$12.50 each in memory or honor of a loved one and help beautify our worship spaces during Advent. Contact Rebecca by December 9 to order (282-4645, or rebeccah@thirdva.org). Your plant can be claimed after the final Christmas Eve service.

Celebrate Christmas at Third: Christmas Eve – Tuesday, December 24

This year, we will celebrate Christmas Eve with a total of five services:

4:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall: This service is particularly suitable for our littlest ones as it will follow the same order as the others, but will be shorter in length. We're also inviting children to come dressed as a character from the nativity for this service!

4:00, 6:00, 7:30, 9:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary: These services will be festive and reverent, ushering in Christmas with our favorite carols, the Christmas story, and candlelight. These services are good for all ages! Childcare will be available for children 3 years old and younger during the 4:00 and 6:00 p.m. services.

Sunday Service Schedule Change – Sunday, December 29

On Sunday morning, December 29, we'll be changing our normal service times. Instead of our three services, we will meet at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary, with time in between for meeting and catching up with friends new and old in the Fellowship Hall.

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)

Need help? Look for volunteers wearing gold or blue name badges. They can help answer your questions, find where to take your kids, and guide you around our building.

Student Ministry: Sunday Night Gatherings

Students in 7th–12th grade are welcome to join us tonight for a pizza dinner in the basement from 6:00–7:00 p.m. Contact Rick (rickh@thirdrva.org) or Andrea (andreaw@thirdrva.org) with any questions.

SUNDAY ADULT DISCIPLESHIP CLASSES

Each Sunday, we offer a few different class opportunities for us to go deep on different topics, grow as disciples, and build community. All classes meet at 10:00 a.m.; locations listed below. For full class descriptions, visit: thirdrva.org/sunday-discipleship.

Delta: Young Adult Community and Conversation

Room 217

Are you in your 20–30s or college age and looking for a place to connect with others and grow at Third? Join us for coffee, conversation and teaching on how to connect faith to daily life, work, relationships and culture.

Metamorphosis Class

Multipurpose Room, 500 Forest Avenue

We are a diverse community seeking God's healing and wholeness for the brokenness in our lives and families through safe, authentic Christian relationships. We're reading *Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life* by Richard Rohr and examining how our brokenness can be the springboard for spiritual growth, no matter what half of life we are in.

Study of Acts

Room 213

The Reveal Class continues our study of the book of Acts, exploring through UP, IN and OUT observations the missionary themes that Luke narrates. The mission of God's people always involves our theology, our community, and our outreach.

Good News Class

Room 101

Join us December 8 and 15 for an Advent-inspired exploration of the Joyous Psalms. We'll study a number of the Joyous Psalms as well as listen to how they were put to music from the 16th century to today. Come celebrate Psalms set to glorious music by Claudio Monteverdi, Johann Sebastian Bach, George Frideric Handel, Johannes Brahms, Felix Mendelssohn, Benjamin Britten, Aaron Copland, John Rutter, and others!

Questions about our Sunday school classes? Contact Derek Mondeau at derekm@thirdrva.org.

THIS WEEK AT THIRD

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|---------------------|---|
| 10 Tuesday | Women's Weekly Morning Study
9:30 a.m., Room 213 (joyce.koontz@gmail.com) |
| 11 Wednesday | Freedom Road Recovery Community
6:30 p.m., Conference Room, 500 Forest Ave (merryoh@gmail.com) |

2019 BUDGET UPDATE

2019 Total Annual Budget
\$4,003,155

November YTD Giving Budget
\$3,230,546

November YTD Giving Actual
\$3,114,209

(difference: \$116,337)



As we begin to close out 2019 and prepare our budget for 2020, we want to share with our church family how the Lord is providing for our finances this year. We are grateful for his provision thus far, and look to him in the weeks to come.

Year-to-date giving through November was \$3,114,209, which is approximately \$116,337, or 3.6%, short of budgeted expectations. It is worth noting that our annual giving budget remains heavily dependent on December giving as, historically, close to 30% of our annual giving occurs during the last months of the year. We faithfully rest in God's grace and provision, and pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to stir our hearts with joyful and overflowing generosity to meet the commitments to which God has called us.

We give praise for God's faithfulness and generosity and invite you to pray that our financial gifts will empower Third's ministry and mission at Forest Avenue, in Richmond and around the world. Your gifts have Kingdom impact.

WELCOME!

¡Bienvenido! 欢迎! مرحباً Добро пожаловать!

We're so glad you're here.

1. LEARN ABOUT THIRD

Visit our website (thirdrva.org), sign up for our ministry emails (thirdrva.org/signup), and pick up a copy of Third Press, our monthly newsletter, from around the church.

2. JOIN US FOR COFFEE

Join us for our Welcome Coffee next Sunday, December 15 at 10:00 a.m. in the Parlor. You'll meet a few people and learn about Third's vision, beliefs, and how you can get involved.

3. FIND COMMUNITY

Our parish groups provide the opportunity for each person at Third to grow in our relationship with God, build authentic community, love our actual neighbors and bless our city. Find a group meeting near you at thirdrva.org/parish-life.