

WAITING FOR THE  
BRIDEGROOM

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

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2019

“The disappointment, brokenness, suffering, and pain that characterize life in this present world is held in dynamic tension with the promise of future glory that is yet to come. In that Advent tension, the church lives its life.”

FLEMING RUTLEDGE

## SANCTUARY DECORATIONS

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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 “chrism” 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.

### **Poinsettia Contributions**

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- Sue and Rick Hendrickson, in memory of their parents.
- Jim and Liz Slate, in memory of loved ones.
- Jim and Liz Slate, in celebration of our families.
- Agnes Smith, in memory of loved ones.
- Diane, Robert, Paul and Frank Atkinson in memory of P. T. and Margaret Atkinson and Peggy (Atkinson) Rosen and Robert and Barbara Trifari.
- Holly Smith, in memory of her mom, Ruth Hovelson.
- Bruce and Janet Kay, in memory of loved ones.
- Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm Myers, in memory of our parents.
- Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm Myers, in memory of Patricia V. Myers.
- Marlene and Gary Short, in memory of Steve Keister, Marlene’s brother, and Alpha Fess, Marlene’s mother and Kat Short, Gary’s mother.
- In memory of Adrian Dru Fitch from his family.
- In memory of Myrtle Hacker from Faye and Cullen Rivers.
- Kathy and Jimey Ames, in memory of Ruth Hovelson.

## GATHERING

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*God gathers us all and calls us by his grace.*

### **Prelude**

"Noel X"  
(Louis Daquin)

Jeff Hummel

### **Welcome and Announcements**

### **Preparation for Worship**

From Psalm 118:24

Leader: This is the day the Lord has made;

**People: Let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

### **Silent Preparation for Worship**

#### **† Call to Worship**

From Philippians 4:4–5

Leader: Rejoice in the Lord always.

**People: I will say it again: Rejoice!**

Leader: Let your gentleness be evident to all.

**People: The Lord is near.**

Leader: We rejoice in the hope of Christ's coming.

**People: Let us worship God!**

### **Prayer of Adoration**

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

## GATHERING

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### † Song of Praise

“Come Light Our Hearts”

Words below

*For you, O Lord, our souls in stillness wait.*

*For you, O Lord, our souls in stillness wait.*

*Truly our hope is in you, truly our hope is in you.*

O Lord of life, our only hope, your radiance shines on all who look  
To you in the dark; Emmanuel, come, come light our hearts.

O Joy above all other loves, in you we find more than enough.  
We come as we are; O heal and restore, come light our hearts.

### † Song of Praise

“It Came Upon the Midnight Clear”

Words below

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,  
From angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold:  
“Peace on the earth, goodwill to men, from heaven’s all-gracious King.”  
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come, with peaceful wings unfurled;  
And still their heavenly music floats o’er all the weary world;  
Above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hovering wing,  
And ever o’er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.

For lo! the days are hast’ning on, by prophets seen of old,  
When with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold,  
When the new heaven and earth shall own the Prince of Peace their King,  
And the whole world send back the song which now the angels sing.

## CONFESSING

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### Prayers of the People

Leader: Father, we come to you with humble, repentant hearts. Though our hearts are restless until they rest in you, we restlessly thirst for satisfaction and fulfillment in so many things apart from you. Give us pilgrim hearts that walk lightly in this vale of tears, looking and waiting for the coming kingdom when our souls will finally meet everlasting satisfaction and joy.

**People: For you, O Lord, our souls in stillness wait.**

Leader: Mighty God, we long for your kingdom to come! Come bring your purposes among us and make the force of evil fade. Let your goodness rise among us as righteousness, a rolling stream to quench a thirsty land. Into our world of darkness, loss, oppression and sin, we long for you to come!

**People: For you, O Lord, our souls in stillness wait.**

Leader: Loving Lord, draw near to those who suffer! You came among us to bring good news to the poor and to open blind eyes, to loose the chains that bind and claim life for all who suffer. Bring your healing power into the lives of those among us and those we love who yearn for hope, healing, comfort and life. We look for you to come and act!

**People: For you, O Lord, our souls in stillness wait.**

Leader: For you, O Lord, we wait. As the farmer scatters seed and waits, as the baker mixes the leaven and waits, as the bridal party prepares and waits, so Lord, we wait for you.

**Sing: For you, O Lord, our souls in stillness wait.  
For you, O Lord, our souls in stillness wait.  
Truly our hope is in you. Truly our hope is in you.**

### † 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."

## PROCLAIMING

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*God speaks to us through his word.*

### Scripture Reading

Matthew 25:1–12

<sup>1</sup> “Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. <sup>2</sup> Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. <sup>3</sup> Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, <sup>4</sup> but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. <sup>5</sup> But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.

<sup>6</sup> “And at midnight a cry was heard: ‘Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!’ <sup>7</sup> Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. <sup>8</sup> And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ <sup>9</sup> But the wise answered, saying, ‘No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.’ <sup>10</sup> And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.

<sup>11</sup> “Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us!’ <sup>12</sup> But he answered and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.’

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God!**



# THANKSGIVING

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## Our Offerings

Please pray for our mission partners Together for Tanzania and Third board members Betsy Pollard and Louise Ingold, as they partner with national leaders to train future leaders, expand the outreach of the church, and provide educational and medical support.

## Offertory and Musical Response

“Gloria”  
(Rutter)

Choir

Gloria in excelsis Deo,  
Et in terra pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis.  
Laudamus te, benedicimus te,  
Adoramus te, glorificamus te.  
Gratias agimus tibi  
Propter magnam gloriam tuam.

*Glory be to God on high,  
And in earth peace towards men of goodwill.  
We praise thee, we bless thee,  
We worship thee, we glorify thee.  
We give thanks to thee  
For thy great glory.*

Domine Deus, Rex cælestis,  
Deus Pater omnipotens,  
Domine Fili Unigenite, Jesu Christe.  
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris,  
Qui tollis peccata mundi,  
Miserere nobis.  
Qui tollis peccata mundi,  
Suscipe deprecationem nostram.  
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,  
Miserere nobis.

*O Lord God, heavenly King,  
God the Father almighty,  
O Lord, the only-begotten Son Jesus Christ,  
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,  
Thou that takest away the sins of the world,  
Have mercy upon us.  
Thou that takest away the sins of the world,  
Receive our prayer.  
Thou that sittest at the right of the Father,  
Have mercy upon us.*

Quoniam tu solus Sanctus. Tu solus Dominus.  
Tu solus Altissimus.  
Jesu Christe, cum Sancto Spiritu  
In gloria Dei Patris.  
Amen.

*Thou only art holy. Thou only art the Lord.  
Thou only art the Most High.  
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,  
Art Most High in the glory of the Father.  
Amen.*



## THE LANGUAGE OF CHRISTMAS

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Christmas has special words and special phrases that we hear only at this time of the year. Words which, although we do hear them only at this time of year, are heard literally all over the world as believers celebrate the Christmas season in their own language. Whether in Spanish: *Feliz Navidad*; or in French: *Joyeux Noël*; or in German: *Fröhliche Weihnachten*; or Russian: *С Рождеством Христовым*; or in Portuguese: *Feliz Natal*, we're all saying the same thing: Merry Christmas.

But just as we express our greetings of Merry Christmas to one another, so in our own languages we express our worship and adoration of God. And he hears us all. The twentieth century composer John Rutter chose Latin, the root language of many native tongues, for the text of his stirring Christmas cantata *Gloria*.

This work, which was written in 1974, is in three parts. The first part begins with brilliant fanfares from the brass. The choir reaffirms the praise of the brass with a phrase well known to us all: *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, "Glory to God in the highest." *Et in terra pax*, "And on earth, peace." The entire first section is a series of phrases, many taken directly from the Psalms, which express our glory, praise and gratitude to God. The dialogue between the choir and the brass continues through to the exciting end of the first section.

The second section is quite different. It is ghostly and ethereal in nature. It begins softly in the organ and then the choir enters: *Domine Deus*, "Lord God," *Rex cælestis*, "King of heaven." The praise of God the Father and Christ the only-begotten Son of the Father builds and builds in a dramatic crescendo: *Rex cælestis!* "King of heaven!" And then, quietly, entreatingly: "Hear our prayer; have mercy upon us."

Then, as you'll note in the translation, the final section is pure praise. Praise of the Father, praise of the Son and the Holy Spirit. And finally, that phrase which has come to be a part of our own language returns: *Gloria in excelsis Deo*. The song of the angels: "Glory to God in the highest." The piece closes with a Hebrew word, one which has also become a part of our English language; a word which the translators of the King James Bible refused to even attempt to translate, unable to capture its sense of endorsement, its sense of verification, of binding oath, commitment and promise, its sense of prayer and praise, of finality and resolution. "So let it be," "So be it," the word *Amen*.

## Prayer Needs

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**For health:** Bradley Crawford, Randy Raggio, Elaine Turner, Cheryl Fluckiger, Terry Jones, Pam Smith, Laurie Marsden, Lynn Pendleton, Eileen Raynor, Pam Smith, 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 the care and protection of infants, children, and youth; and for the intimate knowledge that each one is a beloved child of God.

## SENDING

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† **Song of Commission**      “Angels We Have Heard on High”      #82 in the Hymnal

† **Commission and Benediction**      (From Revelation 19:6–7; 9)

Leader:      Hallelujah, for the Lord God Almighty reigns.  
Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory!

**Everyone: For the wedding of the Lamb has come,  
and his bride has made herself ready.  
Blessed are those who are invited  
to the wedding supper of the Lamb!**

**Postlude**      “Let All Together Praise Our God”      Jeff Hummel  
**(11:15 service only)**      (Paul Manz)

## SERVICE NOTES

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**Today’s flowers** are given in honor of our mission partner Together for Tanzania.

## NEWS & EVENTS

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### **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*

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**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.

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### **Student Ministry: Sunday Night Gatherings**

Beginning January 5, students in 7th–12th grade are welcome to join us on Sunday evenings in the Fellowship Hall from 7:00–8:30 p.m. Contact Rick ([rickh@thirdrva.org](mailto:rickh@thirdrva.org)) or Andrea ([andreaw@thirdrva.org](mailto:andreaw@thirdrva.org)) with any questions.

## SUNDAY ADULT DISCIPLESHIP CLASSES

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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](http://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.

### **Good News Class**

*Room 101*

Join us today 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](mailto:derekm@thirdrva.org).*

## 2019 BUDGET UPDATE

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**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.

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## 1. LEARN ABOUT THIRD

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

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## 2. JOIN US FOR COFFEE

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

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## 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](http://thirdrva.org/parish-life).