

LO, HE COMES!

*An Advent Series
from the Book of Isaiah*

Sunday | December 18, 2016

THE SIGN

Fourth Sunday in Advent

One to another hear them speak,
The patient virgins wise:
"Surely He is not far to seek,"—
"All night we watch and rise."
"The days are evil looking back,
The coming days are dim;
Yet count we not His promise slack,
But watch and wait for Him."

Christina Rossetti

Welcome!
Bienvenido!
欢迎!
مرحباً

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

*Third Church exists to spread the gospel and seek
the Shalom of metro Richmond and the world through
a movement of communities and congregations,
welcoming people of all cultures to the glory of Jesus Christ.*

Advent is a word that means “coming” or “arrival.” Advent is a four-week period in which the church looks back to remember the fulfilled promises of Jesus’ first coming, and looks forward to his promise to come again. Just as John the Baptist told the Jewish people to prepare for the Lord’s coming, we gather to encourage each other to be ready for his coming again. The purple color of Advent is the color of royalty, reminding us of the coming King.

Sanctuary Decorations

The purple Advent banners and other decorations now adorning our Sanctuary are the first installment of a year-long effort to use colors and textures to enrich our space and experience of worship, but also to serve as visual clues that, as Christians, we “tell time differently” with a calendar shaped by the story of God’s works of salvation and renewal. Tied closely with our Advent sermon series imagery, banners made from ribbons remind us of the “broken beauty” of the Kingdom as Isaiah saw it and we see it now, too: the way we can rejoice in the signs of new creation while acknowledging that many signs of hope still seem fractured, dim, and obscured by the present world.

We’ll continue to use that motif (and construction technique) for the next several seasons, changing from Advent purple to Christmas white and gold before our services on Christmas Eve. At that time, we’ll also replace the dry, brown wreath and window decorations with the hopeful and familiar evergreen ones, including a “Chrismon” tree that represents the many names and symbols for Jesus. Those will stay through Epiphany in mid-January.

All this is the work of a multi-generational team of people ages 6 to 65, and if you’re interested in being part of that effort, or would just like more information, please contact Mark Sprinkle at marks@thirdrva.org.

GATHERING

God gathers us all and calls us by his grace.

Prelude

8:45 a.m.

Alleluia

11:15 a.m.

"And the Glory"

Sanctuary Choir

Welcome and Announcements

Preparation for Worship

Leader: Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

People: Amen.

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

Call to Worship

From Isaiah 2, 11, 40 and 7

Leader: We light these candles as a sign of the coming light of Christ.
Advent means coming.

**People: We are preparing ourselves for the days
When the nations shall beat their swords into plowshares,
And their spears into pruning hooks;**

Leader: Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
Neither shall they learn war any more.

People: The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard with the goat,

Leader: The calf and the lion and the fatling together,
And a little child shall lead them.

**People: Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be
made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough
places a plain.**

Leader: Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it
together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

People: The Lord will give you a sign. Look, the virgin is with child,

Leader: And she will bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel, which means God
with us.

Prayer of Adoration



Songs of Praise

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

#173 in the Hymnal
(v. 1,2,3)

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem!
Come and behold him, born the King of angels;

Refrain

O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord.

True God of true God, Light from Light eternal,
Lo, he shuns not the virgin's womb;
Son of the Father, begotten, not created;
Refrain

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation!
O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above:
"Glory to God, all glory in the highest";
Refrain

"God With Us"

(See following page)

GOD WITH US

Oh, you've come to bring peace, to be Love, to be near-
Oh, you've come to be Hope to this world for your hon-

- er to us. You've come to bring life, to be Light,
- or and name, and you've come to take sin to bear shame,

to shine bright - er in us. Oh, Em-man - u - el, God with

us. Our De-liv-er-er, you are Sav - ior. In your pres- ence, we

find our strength. O - ver ev' - ry - thing, our Re-demp - tion,

God with us, you are God with us.

You are here. You are ho - ly. We are stand- ing in your glo - ry.

Words and Music by Jason Ingram & Leslie Jordan;
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CONFESSING

God invites us to be honest with him about ourselves.

Song of Confession

**Everyone: O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer
Our spirits by thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight.**

Silent Confession

† Words of Comfort

Isaiah 40:1-2

Leader: Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.
Your sins are pardoned.
The penalty is paid.
You are forgiven and free.

People: Thanks be to God!

Celebration of Baptism
10:00 a.m. service

Mason Robert Henley

Song

"The Lord Bless You and Keep You"

The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make his face shine upon you.
And give you peace, and give you peace, and give you peace forever.



Greeting of Peace

THANKSGIVING

We respond to God's word.

Our Offerings

Pray for the Sydnor family in France; for their ministry of activating local churches for ministry to refugees.

Offertory

8:45 a.m. service

"O Magnum"

Alleluia

O magnum mysterium,
et admirabile sacramentum,
ut animalia viderent Dominum natum,
jacentem in praeseptio!
Beata Virgo, cujus viscera
meruerunt portare
Dominum Jesum Christum.
Alleluia!

O great mystery,
and wonderful sacrament,
that animals should see the newborn Lord,
lying in a manger!
Blessed is the Virgin whose womb
was worthy to bear
our Saviour, Jesus Christ.
Alleluia!

10:00 a.m. service

"O Come, O Come Emmanuel"

Worship Team

11:15 a.m. service

"People of Promise, Arise"

Sanctuary Choir

People, arise! Prepare the way! Let your music greet the day.
Let all the earth break forth with singing.
Let all the mountains and valleys start ringing.
People, arise and share the news: "Christ the King is coming soon!"

People, arise and wake the dawn! Shout for joy! Break forth in song!
Prophets foretold the wondrous story.
Angels will tell of his infinite glory.
People, arise and share the news: "Christ the King is coming soon!"

Hark, a thrilling voice is sounding. "Christ is nigh," it seems to say.
Cast away the works of darkness, O ye children of the day!
Honor, glory, might and blessing, praise the coming of the Son.

People, rise, your Light has come. People of promise, arise!
People, rise, your Light has come. People of promise, arise!

People, arise and greet the morn! Soon a Savior will be born.
He is the Hope of ev'ry nation.
All in him shall find salvation.
People, arise and share the news: "Christ the King is coming soon!"

People, arise! People of promise, arise!

PROCLAIMING

God speaks to us through his word.

Prayer of Illumination

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 7:10-16

¹⁰ Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, ¹¹ “Ask the Lord your God for a sign, whether in the deepest depths or in the highest heights.”

¹² But Ahaz said, “I will not ask; I will not put the Lord to the test.”

¹³ Then Isaiah said, “Hear now, you house of David! Is it not enough to try the patience of humans? Will you try the patience of my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel. ¹⁵ He will be eating curds and honey when he knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, ¹⁶ for before the boy knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, the land of the two kings you dread will be laid waste.

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God!

Message:

The Sign

+ Corey Widmer +

Notes:

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

RESPONDING

We respond to God's word.

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

Sung Refrain: O come, let us adore him.

Prayer Needs

For Health

Corrine Boyd, Loma Shafer, Missy Deregibus, Jack Schilthuis, Katie Payne, Allen Lawrence, Jerry Ramsey, Betty Cox, Charles Ellison, Dru Fitch, Mark Koontz, Margaret Leith, Dabney Harvey, Lou Hanscom, Carol Holt

For Comfort

Deaths – Joseph Hall (wife, Perrin Thompson Hall, 11/25), Bob Horne, Camille Foster and Emily Henley (mother and grandmother, 11/21), Art Wood (mother, 11/19), Elizabeth Barila (mother, 11/7), Jane Mims (mother, 10/31), Percy Strickland (father, 10/24), Patrick L. Wallace (father, 10/16), Dania Luby (father, 10/8), Wade Perkins, Sally Tate, Emily Schindler (father, grandfather, 9/25)

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.

For Our Nation and the World – Nigeria

With approximately 184 million inhabitants, Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa and the seventh most populous country in the world. The country is inhabited by over 500 ethnic groups, of which the three largest are the Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. The official language is English. Nigeria is divided roughly in half between Christians, who live mostly in the southern part of the country, and Muslims in the northern part.

- Please pray for the Reigners Bible Church International in the southern city of Uyo. The church building collapsed on December 10, 2016 when the metal girders fell and the corrugated iron roof caved in. More than 160 people were killed.
- Pray for peaceful relations between the Muslims in the north and the Christians in the south.
- Pray against the violent activities of Boko Haram that besiege towns and villages in northeast Nigeria. Pray for abducted girls to be released and resettled.
- Nigeria's greatest spiritual need is for discipleship. Pray for sound teaching and theological education. Pray for the churches to adopt a balanced approach to spiritual warfare, healings and tribal religious practices.
- Pray for the many unreached people groups in Nigeria. Millions of Nigerians are practicing traditional African religions and millions are practicing various forms of Islam. Pray for outreach efforts to these unreached peoples.

Missionary Prayer and Care groups are not meeting during the month of December.

SENDING

God sends us into the world as his witnesses.

† **Song of Commission**

"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.

Let earth and heavenly saints proclaim
The power and might of his great Name.
Let us exalt on bended knee:
Praise God, the Holy Trinity.

Praise to the King, his throne transcends;
His crown and kingdom never end.
Now and throughout eternity
I'll praise the One who died for me.

Amen.

† **Commission**

From Romans 15:13

Leader: May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him,

Everyone: So that we may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit!

† **Benediction**

Choral Benediction

"Hallelujah" Chorus from Handel's *Messiah*

8:45 and 11:15 a.m. services

Sanctuary Choir

Postlude

"From Heaven Above to Earth I Come"

Jeff Hummel

11:15 a.m. service

(Michael Bedford)

If you would like prayer for any reason, two elders are available at the front of the Sanctuary (by the lectern) after each service. We invite you to come forward for any prayer needs you may have.

SERVICE NOTES

Today we celebrate the baptism of Mason Robert Henley, son of Emily and Michael Henley. Relatives present today are Bob and Susan Horne, Alan Fox and Camille and Matt Foster. Elder representing the Session by holding the font is Mark Holt. The prayer sponsor is Camille Foster.

Today's flowers are given in honor of our mission partners the Sydnor family in France; for their ministry of activating local churches for ministry to refugees.

Today's liturgist: L.J. Jaworski

The Gift of the Kingdom

2016 Stewardship Season

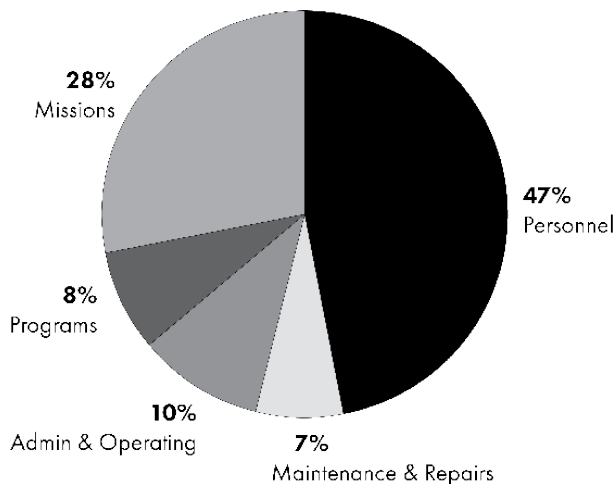
"Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the Kingdom." Luke 12:32

We believe the local church is one of God's great vessels of hope for the world. Through the local church, the gospel is proclaimed, community is formed, individuals grow, and the Kingdom is embodied.

To that end, every year we look at what it will cost us in the coming year to live as the particular local church God has called us to be. The staff and elders have carefully projected our budget for the coming year, and now in this season we come together to express our commitment of faith in pledging our financial resources to God through the work of this local church. Our pledges help us determine the accuracy of the budget and ensure our financial commitments to our 75+ mission partners.

If you would still like to make a commitment to Third for the new year, we welcome you to use the cards in the pews and drop them in the offering plate or return them to the church office. As we make our commitments, we pray for the Spirit and power of God to use our gifts to bring a harvest for his Kingdom. "Since you excel in so many ways — in your faith, your gifted speakers, your knowledge, your enthusiasm and your love from us — I want you to excel also in this gracious act of giving." 2 Corinthians 8:7 (NLT).

2017 Projected Budget: \$3,291,024



CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S AT THIRD CHURCH

Christmas Eve: Saturday, December 24

Join us as we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ!

4:00 p.m – Family friendly service in the Fellowship Hall

6:30 and 8:30 p.m. – Candlelight services in the Sanctuary

11:00 p.m. – Candlelight and Communion service in the Sanctuary

*Childcare available for infants and toddlers during the 4:00 and 6:30 p.m. services.

Christmas Morning: Sunday, December 25

Join us for one service on Christmas morning at 11:15 a.m. in our Sanctuary to celebrate the newborn King! Dress casually. Sunday School (for children and adults) will not meet this week. *Childcare available for infants and toddlers.

New Year's Day: Sunday Morning, January 1 - Service Times Changing!

On New Year's Day, we'll be changing our schedule to have only two services, one at 10:00 a.m. and one at 11:15. Sunday School (for children and adults) will not meet this week.

NEWS & EVENTS

Today! Welcome Coffee – Sunday, December 18, 9:45 a.m., Parlor

If you're new to Third, come to this monthly gathering to meet a few people and learn about Third's vision, what we believe and how to get involved. Questions? Contact Beth Nichols: bethn@thirdrva.org.

Today! College Ministry Sunday School Class, Room 215, 10:00 a.m.

College students who are home for the holidays: come together for community and fellowship during the Sunday school hour. We'd love to catch up with you!

End of Year Contributions – Heads Up!

Any end of year contributions must be in to our office or postmarked by December 31. For any questions, please contact Lynley Steadman at lynleys@thirdrva.org or 282-4645.

New Year Men's Dinner – Tuesday, January 3, 6:00 p.m. Fellowship Hall

Join us as our friend Tommy Thompson shares with us at our annual Men's New Year Dinner. Dinner will be provided by Annhorner Truitt, and all first-timers and guests are free. Otherwise, cost for dinner is \$5. Learn more: thirdrva.org/events. Questions? Contact Tom Barila (tomb@thirdrva.org).

Newcomers Class –January 15, 20-21

Are you ready to explore a deeper commitment to this part of the body of Christ? We offer this class as an opportunity for you to learn about Third's vision for worship, discipleship, community, serving and outreach. At the end of the class, you can decide if you'd like to join our church community as a covenant member. More information and sign-ups at: thirdrva.org/newcomers.

Dinner 8's - Kicking Off in the New Year!

Want to meet more folks at Third over a good meal? Sign up for Dinner 8's. You'll be placed in a supper group that meets monthly from January through April. New groups are forming now. Sign up at thirdrva.org/events. Questions? Contact Allene Brown: allenedbrown@gmail.com or 441-1668.

New Third Church Sermons Podcast!

If you have subscribed to our sermons podcast in the past, you may have noticed a disturbance in your feed! We're actually migrating our sermons to a new podcast that's compatible with our updated technology that you will now have to subscribe to. To find the new podcast, go to thirdrva.org/itunes or search the iTunes store for Third Church, and select the podcast with our gold logo. Questions? Contact Becca Payne at beccap@thirdrva.org.

SUNDAY ADULT DISCIPLESHIP CLASSES

Join us for our adult Sunday morning discipleship classes during the 10:00 a.m. worship hour.

Please note that we will be taking a break from Sunday school for the next two weeks: Sunday, December 25 and January 1. We look forward to seeing you back here for Sunday morning discipleship in the new year, kicking off on January 8!

Questions? Contact Tom Barila (tomb@thirdrva.org).

**Can We Talk:
How Does an Ancient Book
Guide Modern Life?**

Fellowship Hall

A Study of Hebrews

Room 101

**The Original Christmas Story:
An Advent Class**

Room 217

Marriage Fellowship

Room 215

Sermon Chat

Fellowship Hall

**Forgiving and Reconciling:
Bridges to Wholeness and Hope**

500 Forest Avenue, Room 109

**Did Our Hearts Not Burn Within Us?
A Study of Luke**

Room 213

Orphans and the Gospel

Room 207

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY - SUNDAY MORNING

Please note! We'll be taking a break from Sunday school for the next two weeks: Sunday, December 25 and January 1. We will still have childcare for all toddlers and infants.

DURING THE 10:00 A.M. SERVICE:

All of our children's Sunday morning discipleship classes take place during the 10:00 a.m. worship hour.

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.

A Wiggle Room is available if you prefer to have your child with you but he or she is a little too active or noisy to be in the service. You'll be able to watch the service via streaming. The room is located near the Student Ministry area in Room 132.

Please let us know if we can help familiarize you with all that is available at Third for your children. Contact Kathy White (kathyw@thirdrva.org) or Tracie Meadows (traciem@thirdrva.org).

STUDENT MINISTRY

Please note! We'll be taking a break from Sunday school for the next two weeks: Sunday, December 25 and January 1.

Sunday morning student ministry

Join us for food, solid teaching, and great people as we grow together in God's word.

600 Forest Avenue, Student Ministry Area

10:00-11:00 a.m. for all students in 7th-12th grade.

Sunday evening student ministry

Join us from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m in the Fellowship Hall.

THIS WEEK AT THIRD

Sunday, December 18

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

9:45 a.m. Welcome Coffee – Parlor

Monday, December 19

7:00 p.m. Kingdom Knitters – Parlor

Tuesday, December 20

6:30 p.m. Dinner study group – Kitchen, 500 Forest Avenue

7:00 p.m. Deacons meeting – Multipurpose Room, 500 Forest Avenue

Thursday, December 22

7:00 p.m. Choir rehearsal – Choir Room

7:00 p.m. Worship team rehearsal – Sanctuary

7:00 p.m. Needle's Eye Young Professionals Grp. – Multipurpose Room, 500 Forest Avenue

Friday, December 23 - Church Office closed

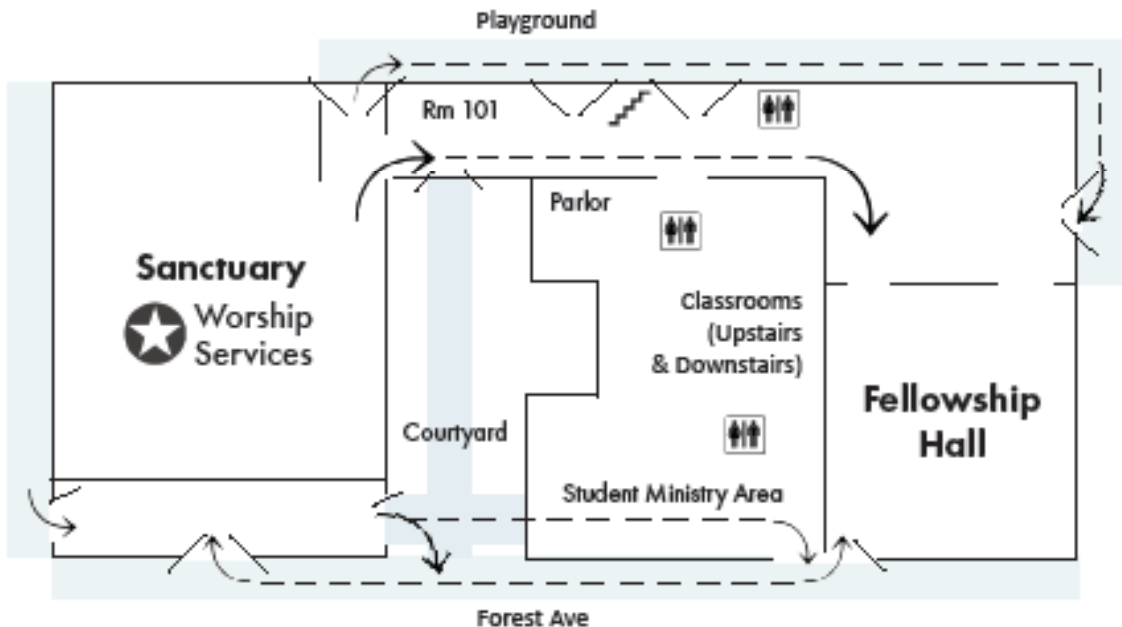
LEARN MORE ABOUT THIRD

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. We have a couple opportunities for you to connect with us and help you find out more about Third.

- **Sign up for emails:** thirdrva.org/signup
- **Pick up Third Press:** Our monthly newsletter can be found around the church.
- **Follow us on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram:** @thirdrva
- **Today! Welcome Coffee at 9:45 a.m. in the Parlor.** Start here to learn more about Third.

SUNDAY MORNINGS AT THIRD

If you need help or have any questions at any point on a Sunday morning, look for individuals wearing carnations or yellow name badges. They're here to help answer questions, find you seats, and guide you around our building.



Third Church
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500 Forest Ave.
Richmond, VA 23229
www.thirdrva.org



A Covenant Order
of Evangelical Presbyterians