



# THIRD PRESS

January 2018



## PARISH LIFE

*Launching this January at Third Church*

### LETTER FROM COREY

*Dear Third Church family,*

In August of 2015, a group of about 30 of us met in a home in the West End to talk about a different vision for community life at Third Church. We wondered: What would happen if we re-organized our church around geographic-based community? Could we deepen our experience of authentic Christian relationships? Could this help us grow as disciples? Could we more effectively reach our neighbors and neighborhoods with the love of Christ? Could this work at Third?

We decided to go for it. We pulled together a group of willing “guinea pigs” to give an early pilot version of “Parish Groups” a try. That early pilot group multiplied into four more pilot Parish Groups. We began to see that yes, this model could indeed work to build community, deepen discipleship, and extend the mission of Jesus. But it took two more years of readjusting, planning and preparing. It took us two more years of getting some things right and a lot of things wrong. It took us two more years to get the right staff in place to make it viable. And it took us two more years of prayer, more prayer, and more prayer on top of that.

So now, more than two years later, we are ready to launch! This January, we are prepared to roll out our vision of Parish Groups to the whole congregation. But before we do that, we wanted to communicate some important lessons we’ve learned over the past couple years that will hopefully help you prepare your hearts, minds and families for life within a Parish Group.

**LESSON 1: Come as you are.** Parish Groups are meant to be spiritual families of people following Jesus together in ordinary life. Picture this: you gather together in a living room and a big basket of unfolded laundry sits on the coffee table, and while you talk and pray your host continues to fold. That’s a picture of a Parish Group: following Jesus together in ordinary life.

### OUR STAFF

**Rev. Corey Widmer**  
Lead Pastor

**Rev. Ed Satterfield**  
Executive Pastor

**Rev. Rick Hutton**  
Associate Pastor for Students  
(grades 6 – 12)

**Laurie Jaworski**  
Mission Pastor

**Andrea Woie**  
Student Ministry Associate

**Alan Ware**  
Director of Finance  
& Administration

**Tom Barila**  
Director of Adult Ministries

**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 Connection 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 Care Ministries

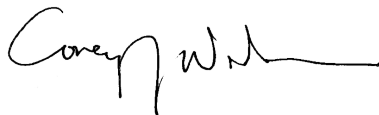
**LESSON 2: Everyone gets a part.** The best activities are the ones which everyone gets a part and everyone has a voice. Parish Groups are spiritual families in which young and old, families and singles, are all called together through Jesus to a common mission. In Parish Groups, everyone can participate and everyone has a part to play—whether it's contributing to a meal, leading a game, welcoming a visitor, or helping lead a discussion. There's a place for all and part for all.

**LESSON 3: Be a Good Neighbor.** One of the most important things that makes Parish Groups different than a typical small group is that they exist for the sake of those who are not part of the group- your neighbors! Parish Groups are always asking, How can we better love and serve our neighbors in the name of Jesus? Parish Groups take the simple command of Jesus- to love our neighbors as ourselves—and attempts to practice it literally.

I am so excited that after nearly two years of praying and planning, we are now officially launching "Parish Life" here at Third. Inside, you can find all the details about how to get more information and how to get involved. In the meantime, please pray that God would continue to bless this journey that began more than two years ago and by His grace will continue for many years to come!

Grace and peace of our Savior+

Corey



"...we are now  
officially launching  
'Parish Life' here  
at Third."

## *Beginnings*.....

### **A JANUARY VISION SERIES ON GENESIS 1-2**

This January we are not just beginning a new calendar year. We are also beginning a new model of church with our Parish Life launch. We are beginning a serious consideration of how to update our church building infrastructure. We are beginning to figure out how to live life together in smaller forms of community scattered throughout the neighborhoods of Richmond. We are beginning to explore new and fresh ways to partner with the Christian Arabic Church. Beginnings abound!

There is no place in the Bible that addresses new beginnings like the book of Genesis. This January in our worship we will focus on four Beginnings that we

see in the first two chapters of the first book in the Bible. We'll explore how these biblical beginnings direct and lead our new beginnings as Third Church. Let's begin anew together.

#### **JAN. 7: THE BEGINNING OF CREATION**

#### **JAN. 15: THE BEGINNING OF HUMANITY**

#### **JAN. 22: THE BEGINNING OF COMMUNITY**

#### **JAN. 29: THE BEGINNING OF WORK**



*Community and mission  
where you live.*

At Third, we desire everyone to be known, cared for, and encouraged to mature as disciples of Christ.

In order to do this, we are reclaiming an old—and biblical —vision for how we do church together. This vision impacts how we build community, grow as disciples, and love our neighbors. Through Parish Groups we will provide each person at Third the opportunity for gospel community, intentional discipleship, and localized mission within your neighborhood.

God is inviting us to participate in his grand plan to renew all things. We hope you join us.

**Starting this January, we are inviting you to join a Parish Group in your area of Richmond.**

## **WHAT IS A PARISH GROUP?**

Simply, a Parish Group is a community of people seeking to follow Jesus together and extend his mission in a specific place. These two elements, community and mission, are the foundation upon which Parish Groups are built. Parish Groups are always open that normally consist of 15-20 adults plus children, or as many people can fit in a home. Parish Groups meet weekly, and follow the Up/In/Out rhythm. Parish Groups offer a social environment in which men, women and children can grow as disciples of Jesus, deepen relationships, and participate in God's mission to renew all things.

## **And what's the difference between a Parish Group and a Parish Area again?**

Parish Areas are just how we've organized the geographic regions around Richmond where our church family lives. These smaller communities, called parish areas, will insure that each person in our church comes to be known more intentionally and intimately because our elders and deacons will be organized across these parish areas. Everyone is in a Parish Area since it only refers to how we've organized the congregation, but you can choose to be a part of a Parish Group—and we strongly encourage you to do so!

## **HOW CAN I JOIN A PARISH GROUP?**

We'll have our official Parish Life Experience in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday, January 21 and 28 from 9:30–11:30 a.m., where you can find out which Parish Area you live in and which groups are happening in your area. If you can't make it to the Fellowship Hall on those Sunday mornings, all the information will be on the website: [thirdrva.org/parish-life](http://thirdrva.org/parish-life).

***Find out more on the next page!***

*Find out more about the Parish Group in your area at the:*

# Parish Launch Experience

## WHEN & WHERE

Sunday morning, January 21 and 28  
9:30 – 11:30 a.m.  
Fellowship Hall

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

Learn which Parish Area you live in and which groups are meeting near you. Meet the leaders of your group, and celebrate this new opportunity we have to love our neighbors and our city.

## WHY YOU SHOULD COME

Because we believe that we were called to seek the renewal of all things, and that the renewal of all things starts in our backyards. Life in Parish Groups starts here, you'll get everything you need to start building community and living missionally right in your neighborhood.

*We also promise it will be fun.*

## HOW WILL IT WORK

Sunday school classes for the adults will be on break for these two weeks in January, to make sure everyone has the opportunity to come and learn how they can be involved in a Parish Group in their area and to meet other folks who live near them. (You just need to come one week!)

When you come to the Fellowship Hall that morning, head to the maps to identify which Parish Area you live in. From there, you'll find a table dedicated to your Parish Area where you can get all the info you need on the Parish Group near you.

***Don't worry, we'll have plenty of volunteers on hand to help you navigate the steps and keep you fueled with coffee and snacks.***



# SUNDAY MORNING DISCIPLESHIP

## Sunday Morning Discipleship

### ADULT SUNDAY MORNING DISCIPLESHIP UPDATES:

This year, we created a new calendar rhythm to help every person at Third join a learning community at different entry points throughout the year. These classes help form us as a community by cultivating our love for one another as a household of God and to equip us to make a difference in our neighborhood by engaging in God's mission for the world.

All of the discipleship classes for adults meet at 10 a.m. We invite you to join us and give a discipleship class a try.

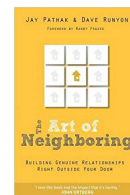
#### JANUARY TERM: JANUARY 7, 14, 21, 28

- **PARISH LAUNCH:** Join us in the Fellowship Hall on the 21st and 28th to help us kick off our new Parish Model! We'll be learning more about Parish life, and you'll have an opportunity to find out which groups will be meeting in your area.
- On January 7 through 28 we'll take a break from our classes. For these weeks, we'll set up coffee in Fellowship Hall so you can still have an opportunity for fellowship and catching up with old or new friends!

#### FEBRUARY TERM: FEBRUARY 4, 11, 18, 25

Each winter, we take a month to get on the same page by combining our adult Sunday discipleship classes. We study an issue that has bearing on how we live our lives as Christ-followers no matter what age or stage of life we find ourselves in.

The February Term will be kicked-off with preaching and teaching on Feb. 4 from pastor and author Jay Pathak, whose book, *The Art Of Neighboring*, is helping us frame the conversation about how we really love our neighbors as expressed in the Great Commandment. Save the date, and get excited for this awesome February Term!



“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?’ Jesus replied: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.” - Matthew 22:36-40

### A NOTE TO THE THIRD FAMILY

*Dear Friends,*

The family of Becky Slootweg would like to thank all of the support given to my mother and my family. My mom loved being a part of the Dean Reed class, the Kingdom Knitters, the Young at Heart and Sara's circle. And of course worship at 8:30. When she was no longer able to attend these activities you kept up with her with visits, cards and phone calls.

Rick and I just want you to know how very much we appreciate your kindness to our family.

Blessings,  
Rick, Sue & Erik Hendrickson

# EVENTS CALENDAR

**JAN. 14, 19-20**

## NEWCOMERS CLASS

Are you ready to explore a deeper commitment to this part of the Body of Christ? We'd love to get to know you and provide an opportunity for you to learn about Third's vision for worship, discipleship, community, serving and outreach. We host this class several times a year where you'll hear from Corey Widmer, other Third Leaders and laypeople, and find out more about the community and missional life of Third.

At the end of the class, you'll have an opportunity to become a covenant partner of our church family.

## THE SCHEDULE

Sunday morning, January 14 from 10 - 11 a.m.  
in the Parlor

Friday Evening, January 19 from 6 - 9 p.m.,  
with dinner

Saturday, January 20 from 1 - 4 p.m.

Sunday, January 28 – the Sunday morning  
service you normally attend (for those deciding  
to become members)

**SIGN UP:** [thirdrva.org/newcomers](http://thirdrva.org/newcomers)



THE BARNABAS CENTER  
A COUNSELING, TRAINING & TEACHING MINISTRY

**FEB. 3**

## TAKING CONVERSATIONS DEEPER: A BARNABAS CENTER TRAINING

**8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.**  
**Stony Point Church**

Join us for a one day Barnabas Training to be equipped to better encourage friends facing difficult times in life and faith. This biblically based seminar helps you understand others by gaining a deeper understanding of your own heart. This seminar, led by Barnabas Center staff, will greatly help you get started taking conversations deeper and making them more effective in helping and supporting others.

Sign up on the Barnabas Center website: by Jan. 13 for \$80 discounted cost [thebarnabascenterrva.org](http://thebarnabascenterrva.org).

Call Ed Satterfield for more information or assistance with cost at 282-4645.



# EVENTS CALENDAR

## Men's Conference.....



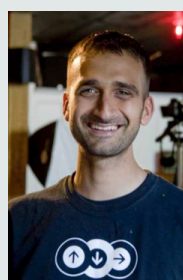
**FEB. 2-3**

### MEN'S CONFERENCE

**Friday evening, 7 – 9 p.m.  
Dinner in your Parish Area**

**Saturday, 8:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.  
Fellowship Hall, Third Church**

Pathak as our keynote speaker, Lead Pastor of the Mile High Vineyard (Denver, CO.) and co-author of the book, *The Art of Neighboring*, with Dave Runyon.



This unique and challenging book asks the question: "What is the most loving thing I can do for the people who live right next door?"

Cost: \$40 for the weekend; or \$10/ Friday night, and \$30/ Saturday

Registrations are open now! Visit:

[thirdrva.org/mens-annual-retreat](http://thirdrva.org/mens-annual-retreat)

For questions, contact Tom Barila: [tomb@thirdrva.org](mailto:tomb@thirdrva.org).

**FEB. 19 – MAY 14**

### JOBS FOR LIFE: SPRING CLASS

**Monday evenings, 6 – 8:30 p.m.  
Fellowship Hall**

Students and Champions Needed – Interest has already begun for the spring term of Jobs for Life, a 12-week biblically based job preparedness program for those who are underemployed, unemployed and unhappy in their current job.

Tell those who might be good candidates to be students about JFL. If you can help as a Champion (mentor) we will need a good number of people to be involved as we expect another large class. Contact Ginger James to connect a student or to talk over your interest in being a Champion at [gingerjames1@icloud.com](mailto:gingerjames1@icloud.com).

For more info on Jobs for Life, visit: [thirdrva.org/jobsforlife](http://thirdrva.org/jobsforlife).



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



Third Church  
500 Forest Ave.  
Richmond, VA 23229  
(804) 282-4645



**THIRD PRESS DEADLINE FOR JANUARY: Friday, Jan. 12. Submit to: [beccap@thirdva.org](mailto:beccap@thirdva.org)**