



The PURPOSES of WORSHIP



The Shape of Worship

Summer Sermon Series

If you would like to receive weekly sermon preparation notes, reflection guides, or access to the sermon audio, please visit our website sermon page.

You can also sign up for our weekly emails from Pastor Corey with links to these resources and community news at www.thirdrva.org/stay-in-touch.

Dear Third Family,

As we go deep into exploring our corporate worship this summer, it gives us an opportunity to reflect on the purposes of what we do every week when we gather. There are at least three functions of the Lord's Day worship as we see directed in Scripture:

First, our corporate worship is expressive.

Psalm 29:2 says, "Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name!" When the people of God gather on the Lord's Day we are fulfilling and expressing the God-ordained purpose of our existence: to bring glory to the Lord, the glory he is due. As the Westminster Shorter Catechism states, "Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever." As those who have been saved by God's grace in Christ and brought into his new community, we now gather together every Sunday to do what we were made to do: to praise and glorify the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the God who made us, loves us, saves us, and sustains us. Our gathering, singing, and praying express our gratitude to God for his grace and fulfill the ultimate purpose of our being, joining with all heaven and earth in bringing God praise. We express our worship to God because he is worthy of it, plain and simple.

Second, our corporate worship is formative.

In Deuteronomy 12:1-8, God gives his people worship instructions that will direct them away from false idols and toward the true and living God. God intends that our weekly gathered worship doesn't just express our hearts' praise but also forms us as the people of God away from idols and toward our true King. As we live in the world, we are constantly being shaped, formed and indeed disciplined by various worldviews, many of which are not in line with the truth of the gospel. We are tempted to believe that we are what we do, what we look like, or what people think of us. We are tempted to believe that we are in control of our lives and that we are masters of our futures.

(continued on page 2)

We develop twisted ideas about our money, our bodies, or our neighbors. We are freighted with fears and anxieties. We hear the call of many false gods.

In that light, one of the principle purposes of worship is to re-form the people of God to bring us in line with the truth of the gospel every week, to shape our hearts, minds and lives according to the storyline of Jesus and his Kingdom. In the Call to Worship, we are reminded that we are summoned by a God who loves us. In Confession, we are called to admit our sin and frailty and then are reminded of our forgiveness and freedom from guilt. As we sing, we are reminded that our life's purpose is not our own advancement. In the Greeting of Peace, we remember that we are not solitary individuals but are a new reconciled family of God. As we hear God's Word, we are reminded that we are people under authority and we let God's Word shape our lives. In the Offering, we are called to remember that our every action is a response of gratitude to God's grace. In the Sacraments, we meet Jesus freshly as he gives us his grace through his Spirit. In the Prayers of the People, we are reminded of the world in sorrow and need and our calling to pray and seek its Shalom. And in the Benediction, we are reminded of our identity as God's sent missionary people in the world. The Lord's Day worship is a weekly opportunity to be shaped by the truth of the gospel and to combat the false storylines that threaten to misshape us every day.

Finally, a third function of the Lord's Day worship is missional.

In 1 Corinthians 14, Paul instructs Christians to worship in such a way that causes outsiders to see Christ's glory and to be drawn in. He describes an unbeliever at a corporate worship gathering: "The secrets of his heart are disclosed, and so, falling on his face, he will worship God and declare that God is really among you" (1 Cor. 14:25). Especially in a rapidly secularizing culture like our own, we must always keep in mind those among us and around us who do not know Christ and seek opportunities to articulate the gospel to them. This does not mean watering down our worship and making it into an evangelistic outreach, but it means ensuring that worship is intelligible and accessible to those who do not know Christ, and that the good news about Jesus is made clear. Additionally, our gathering itself can bear witness to Jesus Christ as people come in and hear stories of healing and transformation, see evidences of God's reconciliation and peace in the people that are gathered, and feel the tangible presence of God's love as given through his Spirit. The Book of Acts makes clear that it was not just the proclaimed word that brought many to Christ but also the way people witnessed within the church the poor being cared for, divided races reconciled, bodies healed, and community flourishing (Acts 2:42-47, 4:32-33).

Expressive, Formative and Missional. It's interesting to note that these three Biblical functions of worship loosely correspond to three distinct Christian traditions: Charismatic, Reformed and Evangelical. The Charismatic tradition tends to emphasize worship as expressive of praise and thanksgiving to God. The Reformed tradition tends to emphasize the formative and instructive aspects of worship. And the Evangelical tradition has emphasized the importance of mission and evangelism in worship. These three together (all of which are represented among the people of Third!) bring balance and stability to the purposes of worship.

May God continue to renew our worship life together according to the Word of God.

Yours in Christ Jesus,

Corey

THIRD's UNTOLD STORIES

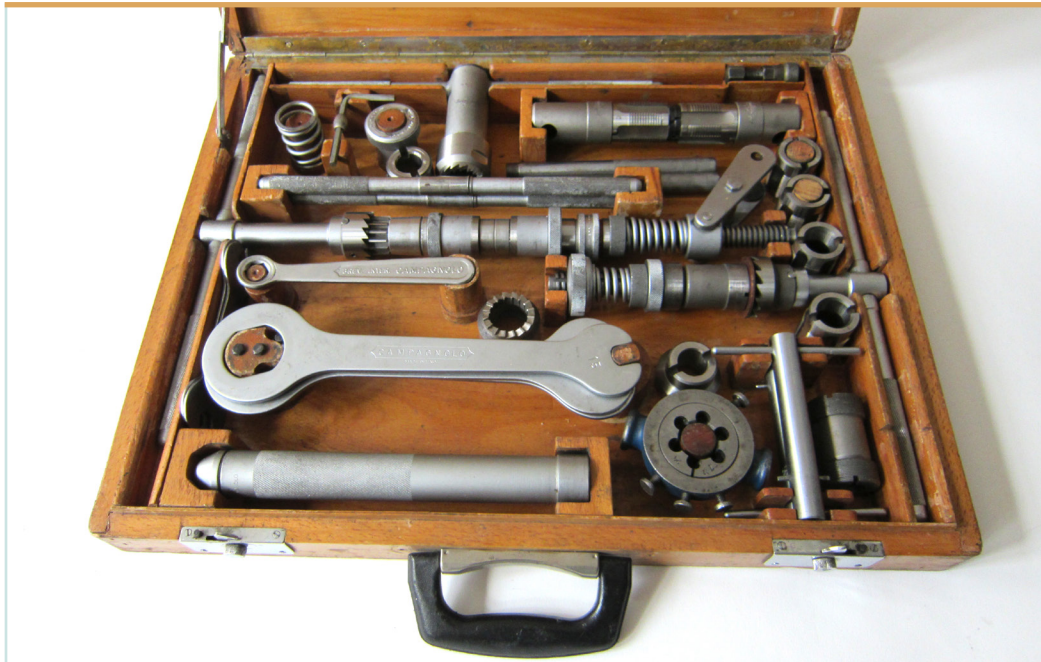
Our gifts of time, talent and treasure are building Kingdom work

She made an appointment with the Practical Needs Committee at Third; she had heard that Third Church might be able to help her, and her need was great. When she and her social services counselor arrived to meet with representatives of the committee their time together began with prayer, inviting God to be present and to guide. The woman then explained she had a \$2000 water bill due to a leaking toilet. A different church had found the leak, but was unable to do anything more. Two thousand dollars far exceeded the maximum approved amount for the committee and the bill could not be paid on the woman's behalf. Knowing that, a deacon present began praying silently for wisdom and the woman was given a pledge of help to repair the leak, instead of a promise to pay the bill. Soon after, some Third members who offer their practical talents to this committee replaced the woman's leaking toilet along with doing some other repairs. Afterwards the city agreed to significantly reduce the woman's outstanding bill.

Year round, people who are often spiritually broken, emotionally drained and financially burdened call to make appointments in the hope of receiving help from Third Church. People come from all over the city, and sometimes from our own congregation, because they have heard at Third there may be help. Sometimes they are referred by social service workers, sometimes by friends and sometimes even by other churches. The generosity of the people of Third make possible this financial and hands-on help! When appropriate, referrals to community resources are provided as well. But always, the people receive a chance to tell their story and to receive prayer, kindness and grace.

"Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share." – 1 Timothy 6:18

– Listwella Donaldson and Melissa Lincoln, Stewardship Committee



THIRD —

*training disciples to
love and transform
the world through
Jesus Christ.*

Rev. Corey Widmer
Lead Pastor

Rev. Ed Satterfield
Associate Pastor for
Congregational Care &
Administration

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

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Director of Christian Education

Lynn Hardwicke
Associate Dir. of Family Ministry

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 Lay Ministries

Arielle Swarr
Director of Communications

Tim Latham
Director of Young Adult Ministries

Rev. Richard Haney
Parish Associate

Rev. Nan Clarke
Parish Associate for
Care Ministries

Rev. Jack Schilthuis
Parish Associate & Counselor

Editor's Note

Email submissions
(<300 words/half a page)
with suggested photos
for the August newsletter to
Vickie O'Dell
(vodell@comcast.net)
before the 2nd Friday
of the month.

LIFE CHANGING SMALL GROUPS

"If you will lead, we will host!" That bargain, struck nearly two decades ago, began the small group gatherings at our home soon after we joined Third Church.

Over the years, we have become more open, more willing to share our hopes and our hurts, confess our anxieties and weaknesses and ask the rest to pray in earnest for us. Members of our group have become truly, brothers and sisters in Christ. I have tried to keep a record of our prayers and the ways they have been answered. God has been that "very present help" in all we bring before Him.



Openness, acceptance, and trust make it possible for us to disagree in love, to laugh, to hope and sometimes, just put one foot in front of the other, with faith in the friendship the Holy Spirit has made possible.

– Linda Hobgood

Sermon Series Reflection Guides

We are in the sermon series "THE SHAPE OF WORSHIP: The formational power of Christian worship." Each Sunday, we have sermon series reflection questions posted on Third's website at www.thirdrva.org/sermons. These are a great tool to use for discussion with small groups.



Do You Know Someone Looking for a Small Group?

September is the time many people want to join a small group. We will form some new small groups this September and we would also like for your group to be praying about who God might want you to invite into your group.

If you know of someone looking for a small group, please have them contact me (Beth Nichols at 804-282-4645 ext. 124 or bethn@thirdrva.org). I can determine what type of group they are looking for, when they are available, and help them get into a group now or put them on our list for a group in September.

– Beth Nichols, Director of Lay Ministries

STAFF SEARCHES UNDERWAY!



This is an exciting time at Third. Multiple staff searches are in process for people to fill important roles in the life and ministry of Christ's church. We want to encourage you to pray for the search teams and for God's leading to the right person that the Lord desires to serve Him at Third in each role.

Ongoing Searches

At press time, the search for **Director of Finance and Administration** is in its final stages. We expect to have the new Director start by August 1st. Due to Arielle Swarr's opportunity to study at Stanford starting in September, the search for her replacement as **Communications Director** is well underway. Several excellent candidates are being considered and our hope is to have a new Director by August 1st so that Arielle can help in their transition. Though sad to lose the gifted ministry of Mark Koontz, the search for a new **organist** has found several excellent candidates. We expect a decision soon. Currently our longest ongoing search is for an **Associate Director for Student Ministry**. We have not yet found the right person for the full time role but are excited to have Sarah Mims serving this summer as a Student Ministry Intern. Our prayer is to have help for Rick and Student Ministry by the beginning of the Fall.

Fresh Searches

This past Sunday, the search for a **Mission Pastor** was begun. We will be exploring possible candidates from all over the world for this position to lead us in following more faithfully after Christ's Kingdom mission. We have also begun to seek a replacement for Judy Hall to serve as the **Executive Assistant for the Pastor**. Judy plans to continue working part time but Corey will need a full time assistant. We hope to hire for this role as soon as the right person is found.

We await the Lord's timing and His choice of the persons He desires for each of these roles. Pray along with the leadership for God's leading and our discerning His will.

– Ed Satterfield,
Associate Pastor for Congregational Care & Administration



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Giving to Gertrude's Orphanage

This May, the 2 year old through 6th grade classes collected medical and personal items for Gertrude's Orphanage in Haiti. Gertrude's Orphanage is a place for children with special needs, some of whom are found abandoned on the streets of Port-au-Prince. Third's Haiti mission team visited Gertrude's last year and this year will be doing Vacation Bible School there in the afternoons. The orphanage gave a list of needed items to Charlotte Gage and we challenged our Sunday School classes to come up with as many as possible during the month of May. The class who collected the most items was given a donut party on the last day of Sunday school. Our children collected over 180 items! The Kindergarten and younger collected 97 of those items, but the winner was Club 56, our 5th and 6th graders. We are excited that our children and families responded so enthusiastically to this worthy project.



Sports-Skills Camp

July 13-17, 8:30 - 2 p.m. at Pump Road. Registration is open! Bring your children, grandchildren or your neighbor! It's a perfect match: we're blending the fun and excitement of great sports training with the great news of God's plan for our lives! We do both in a safe and relationally-oriented environment. Our sports camp is led by skilled college athletes who are affiliated with Sports Outreach Institute. Find out more and register at www.thirdrva.org/sports-skills-camp.



CLEAN UP AND CLEAR OUT!

Saturday, August 22 from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

It is time for a little Fall cleaning. We need your help to remove "junk" and trash from classrooms and meeting areas in the church so we can make better use of the space we have. No skills required. Sign-up will be on the Third registration page and Facebook. Please contact Charles Zoffuto for more information at ac_zoffuto@alumni.citadeledu.

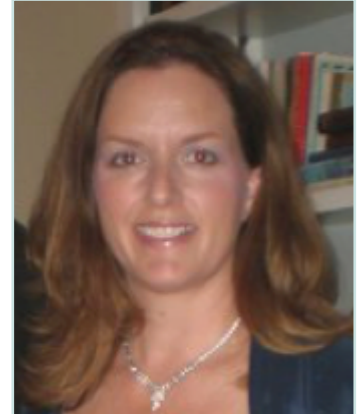
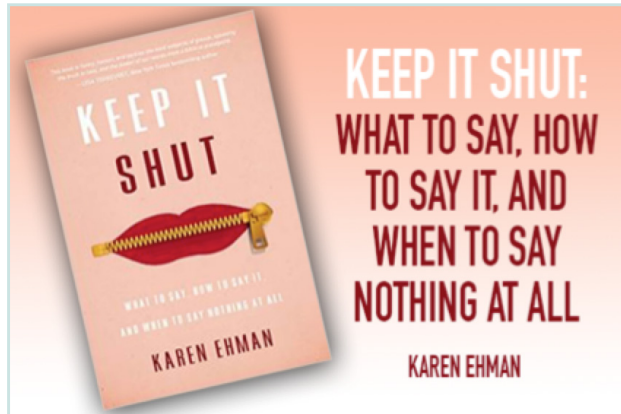


WOMEN'S MINISTRY

Summer Study 2015

Wednesday evenings, July 8 - August 12 from 7 - 9 p.m.

Connie Byers & Karen Hayes will guide our evenings. We'll have fellowship, a DVD, then Connie or Karen will share personally and bring a message specifically for our women, and then we'll have discussions at our tables. Register at www.thirdrva.org/registrations. Sign up now!



STUDENT MINISTRY

Upcoming Events:

Mission Trip in Richmond

July 5 - July 11

Middle School Great Escape

July 27 - August 1

Contact Rick Hutton at Rickh@thirdrva.org for more information.



FOURTH OF JULY

Saturday, July 4 from 7 p.m. - 10:30 p.m.

It's a Third tradition! Spend July 4th with the Flying Squirrels (game at 7:05 p.m.) and enjoy fireworks after the game. A block of seats has been reserved for the contingent from Third. Tickets are \$10 and you can sign up online at www.thirdrva.org/registrations. Contact Tom Barila at tomb@thirdrva.org with any questions.



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THANK YOU, MARK & JOYCE!



What a blessing it is when those in our Third family find their gifting and passion and use it for God's glory in service to Third. Mark and Joyce Koontz have done just that for 15+ years. Mark has been our dedicated organist and Joyce has been a Sunday school teacher for our 3 year-olds in Little Lions. What a blessing they have been to the Third community and to those precious children through the years. Thank you, Mark and Joyce... you will be missed!

"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace." – 1 Peter 4:10

MARY LOU LAIRD



Elder, Missions Partner & Friend

On Monday, June 9th, Mary Lou died from a cardiac arrest. A memorial service celebrating her life is being planned for Saturday, July 11 at 1:00 p.m. here at Third. Rev. Richard Haney will be conducting the service followed by a reception in the Fellowship Hall. Rev. Ed Satterfield is coordinating these plans for her family and friends. Mary Lou passed her love of "Missions" on to so many people...all over the world.