



ThirdPRESS

NOVEMBER 2019

The Discipleship of
Faith Commitments

PAGE 2

**Family Challenges
and Support
Communities**

PAGE 8

**Missions
Updates**

STARTING ON PAGE 9

2020 CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE

renew

Renewing our home to renew our mission. PAGE 4

WELCOMING OUR NEW COVENANT PARTNERS – PAGE 6



THE DISCIPLESHIP OF FAITH COMMITMENTS

I still remember where I was the moment my perspective on financial stewardship changed forever. I was sitting in the office of Kenneth G. Elzinga, a Professor of Economics at the University of Virginia. To say I was intimidated would be an understatement. Ken was a living legend. He had taught twice as many students during his tenure than any other professor at UVA. I was barely 26 years old. As the new InterVarsity staff worker at UVA, Ken had invited me to meet him at his office, then proceeded to ask me what I thought about raising support from people like him. No pressure.

There across a round black wood table, we began talking about fundraising and the struggle I had with asking for faith pledges. Ken listened well. Soon he began to gently challenge my fear of asking new donors to pledge specific amounts to help meet our annual budget.

During a pause in the conversation, Ken went quiet. His hands folded in front of his face, index fingers resting on his chin while his eyes darted left and right in thought. Then with eyes squinted almost to a close, and he said: “Derek, if you don’t tell me your need, and if you don’t tell me how I can give financially to meet that need, then you are robbing someone like me of the opportunity to worship. Because you see, as a Christian and an Economist, in that order, it is my joy to give sacrificially to the work of the Kingdom.”

I had committed a classic mistake common to new fundraisers. I was too focused on myself. My fiscal need. My fear of failure. My fear of rejection. My desire to avoid awkwardness with potential donors. Me. Me. Me. Do you know who I wasn’t thinking about? Ken. At this moment, Ken was trying to tell me the act of giving not only blessed him but was central to his discipleship.

It was a transformative conversation. It not only changed my approach to fundraising as an InterVarsity staff, but more so it changed my heart for giving as a follower of Jesus. As we enter faith commitment season, here are some reflections people like Ken have taught me about how our giving is central to our discipleship.



Giving connects us deeply with the vision and mission of the church.

When we give financially to the work of the church, we participate in the church vision and mission in a new way. Vision and mission are so central to the life of God’s people that without vision we perish and without a mission, we lose our way (Prov. 29:18; 2 Kings 21:1-9).

One of the things I love about new models of entrepreneurship, such as Kickstarter, is the way they meaningfully connect individuals to the development of new products they believe in and care about. Two of the main reasons why financial backers Kickstart a project is 1) they want to be a part of something bigger, and 2) the product reflects their values. That is just another way of saying people Kickstart products to connect deeply with the vision and mission of the company.

If that is true for people who give sacrificially to fund a smartwatch, a travel cooler or my favorite Kickstarter of all time — the card game Exploding Kittens, how much more should that be true for those of us who give to the work of the Kingdom of God?

Giving reveals what we love as ultimate.

As we have learned recently in our sermon series Disruptive Grace, one of the things that God’s grace does for us is that it reveals the idols of our hearts. Idols are good things that become bad things because they have become ruling things in our lives.

In Matthew 6:24, Jesus puts it this way, “No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.” Because our wealth can be put to so many good purposes, it can be particularly difficult to discern when money has become an idol for us. I don’t know anyone who would openly say, “Why yes, I serve money.”

Surprisingly, this is especially true for those of us who make less or those of us who are new to the idea of tithing. Sadly, it is possible to worship money even when you have little to none of it. I love what Henri Nouwen says about this, “Whether we have much or little is not important. What matters is that each of us has the potential of making what money we have available to God.” Here are a few good questions to ask when looking at your budget: What does this budget say about our faith? What does it say about what I value? Does this budget reveal what I love most?

Giving can teach you how to trust God as a family.

One of the most powerful aspects of making a faith commitment is that it allows the entire family to participate in the family's financial discipleship. If we want to raise a generation of children and grandchildren who love God and who embrace a counter-cultural life of God-dependence, what better place to start than talking about our money together as a family.

God is not opposed to sound investment principles or establishing a proper work ethic in our kids. But it is not his priority. The first context of wealth in Scripture has always been worship. God is the provider of all wealth and he gifts that wealth in grace to his people. Humans made in God's image offer some of that gifted abundance back to God sacrificially in loving, joyful worship. Considering a faith commitment reminds us that we do not trust in our ability to provide. We are all but dust, and to dust, we shall return. Instead, we trust in God's gracious provision for all of life.

Now I know that in the south there are two things we never talk about: family and finances. I am suggesting that the Gospel invites us to talk about both, freely and with grace.

Giving can help create community.

This is a little more radical, but not when compared to the early church. In Acts, the early Christians pooled all their material resources into one pot and dispersed those funds to each family as they had need. Now that is radical. What I suggest here is that we consider inviting other Christians we trust into our faith commitment discernment process.

Many of us are single and do not have a spouse to process with. Many of us have never tithed regularly before and have no idea where to start. Some of us feel like we are two steps from financial ruin, but no one knows how bad it is. Even if you process your faith commitment as a family unit, don't process it only with your family.

No matter where you are in your journey of financial discipleship, let this month be the first month you involve others in this crucial area of your life. It is okay to ask for help. It is okay to be ignorant. It is okay to invite correction. It is okay to need support. But it is not okay to be silent and suffer alone. "Bear one another burdens and thereby fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2). Take the risk, in faith, to ask a few trusted friends in your Parish Group or Bible Study to help you hear what God is saying to you about your generosity. And when someone asks you for help, don't judge them. Rather, gently offer the advice and encouragement and accountability they need to take the next step towards health. When we do this, we fulfill the law of Christ.



FAITH COMMITMENT SUNDAY IS NOVEMBER 3

On this day, we as a church make commitments to the Lord with our finances for the upcoming year, trusting that he will provide for us and take care of us. Making a financial faith commitment for a year is a radical act of dependence on the Father, and we believe it is a key way we learn to how to be faithful and mature disciples.

God invites us into a new relationship with our wealth by giving.

Finally, the call to commit our wealth to the advancement of the Kingdom of God is itself a kind of conversion. It isn't just a new way of thinking about money, it can feel like an entirely new way of being. This is because it will require faith in God, his grace and his upside-down Kingdom. Giving is nothing less than God's invitation to redefine the fundamental ways we relate to our wealth.

That brings me back to Dr. Ken Elzinga. This is what challenged me most about him. Ken was the first man I met who had a redeemed relationship with his wealth. God had sanctified this part of Ken's life through a lifetime of submitting his wealth to Christ as a disciple. It was so convicting that it propelled me on my journey to extend the hospitality of God through sacrificial and generous giving.

So, as you consider your faith commitment this year, let me leave you with an encouragement from Dr. Elzinga once again: "We never become poorer by giving to God. We only become richer. As the Apostle Paul says, "You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity..." (2 Corinthians 9:11).

DEREK MONDEAU

renew

2020 CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE

After much prayer, much discussion, and much consultation, we have made some decisions and are ready to move forward.

Sarah and I bought our first home in 2005 when we moved to Richmond. It was a lovely 1200 square foot house in Church Hill built in 1910. We gutted it and renovated it completely. It was perfect for Sarah and me, our little baby girl, and our dog. But ten years later we looked up and realized we were in a different situation. We didn't have one girl anymore, we had four, and they were getting big! The single 6x8 foot bathroom for the six of us was no longer cutting it. We had to make a decision: how do we continue the mission of the Widmer family in this place?

Our first question was, "Are we still called here?" We answered: Yes. So our second question was: "What do we do to this house?" Answer: Make it fit our new situation! So we bit the bullet and added a bedroom and bathroom and expanded the kitchen. We renewed our home so we could continue our mission as a family in that place.

Let me suggest that this is the adventure that we are now about to embark on together! Our church building has served so well as our "spiritual house" for almost seven decades. In this house, thousands of sermons have been preached, tens of thousands of Sunday school lessons taught, hundreds of children have been baptized, hundreds of weddings and funerals conducted, countless community meetings held... too many to recount! This place has been far more than a building. It is the anchor to our weekly rhythms, the common ground of our gatherings, a safe place for our kids to discover the love of Jesus. It's where our spiritual family has been nurtured, encouraged, formed and equipped to carry forth the message of Jesus. This place is our home.

But we're no longer the little family we were in 1956 when this building was built, or even in 1999 when the last improvements were made. So over the last few years, we've had to ask some tough questions. Do we still feel called here? Or should we just move, buy land and build a new building somewhere else?

After much thought and prayer, the Session determined, "We believe God has called us to stay put." The Lord brought us here, he has blessed us here, and this is a strategic location for us to be and to reach all of metro Richmond. We are "called together" here. So the next questions was, "So what do we do to our home so we can continue our mission?"

That has been a huge question that your elders have been wrestling with for several years. After much prayer, much discussion, and much consultation, we have made some decisions and are ready to move forward. We are ready to renew our home so we can renew our mission.

Corey Widmer

Renewing our home to renew our mission.

The State of Our Home

Our facility is wonderful and well-used, but stressed and stretched. “The state of the church’s buildings and facilities are a concern to the members. There is consensus that they are dated, in poor repair, and not in a state that facilitates future growth.” (*TAG Summary report, 2015*)

Since 2015, Third Church has had 40% attendance growth, the largest growth being among 28-35 year olds, many of whom have children.

Our children’s and student ministry spaces are overcrowded and hallways congested. Our mechanical systems constantly fail, there’s limited sanctuary access, and many obstacles to accessibility.

The Values Guiding Our Campaign Decisions

The Next Generation, First.

Our best investment is in the future church. We have prioritized the spaces for our babies, children and students.

Loving Our Neighbors.

We have sought to listen to the concerns of our direct neighbors and we want to bless our local community through our renovations.

Growth Beyond Our Building.

We believe the best size church for us to be at this location is around 1500 covenant partners or 1000-1200 worshippers per Sunday. Our plan seeks to create the best facility for that size church, and our growth beyond that will always be through church planting and church multiplication.

Wise Financial Stewardship.

We’ve tried to balance stretching ourselves while only prioritizing “must-haves” in the plan that make financial sense.

If you’re interested in the campaign and are considering making a lead gift (advanced commitment), please be in touch with Andi Redmond at andir@thirdrva.org to arrange a time to meet with our team.

Otherwise, we will be hosting opportunities for the whole congregation to engage and learn about the campaign in the new year.

What’s Next?

We know that you’re itching to learn more! We’ll be sharing more as plans are confirmed, but in the meantime, these are the dates for the official campaign launch.

January 19, 2020

Vision Sunday: Official kickoff to our campaign.

January 19 – February 23

Many opportunities to learn and engage with the plans and vision of the campaign.

February 23

Commitment Sunday: Offer our commitments as a church family.

WELCOMING OUR NEW COVENANT PARTNERS

God continues to call many new people to Third. On September 29, 2019 we had 27 people join Third as Covenant Partners. Please take time to pray for these new covenant partners and seek to meet them and get to know them.



**FRANK AND SALLY
ACEVEDO**
(Northwest Parish)



JUDY BOLAND
(Ridge Parish)



ELIZABETH DANIEL
(City North Parish)



**BREW AND
GENEVIEVE EMLER**
(Grove Parish)



**MARY KATHARINE
AND HAYNES HILL**
(Three Chopt Parish)



**CAROLYN AND
CHRIS KOCHARD**
(City North Parish)



JODY AND BRYCE LYLE
(City South Parish)



TIM NGUYEN
(City South Parish)



**JOSEPH AND SUSAN
PETRILLO**
(Chesterfield Parish)



**SARAH AND NOAH
POLLACK**
(City East Parish)



**KATHY AND DAVID
SHORT**
(Lauderdale Parish)



**PHILLIP AND REBECCA
SMITH**
(Chesterfield Parish)



**BOB AND JANIE
STACK**
(Mooreland Parish)



SARAH STANLEY
(City North Parish)



**EVAN AND CALLI
STEHLE**
(City South Parish)



**DAVIDSON FAUNCE
AND LAUREN WRIGHT**
(Grove / City South Parish)



WE'RE HIRING!

In the (bittersweet) anticipation of Kathy White and Beth Marriott's retirements in early 2020, we're preparing to hire for their replacements. If you know of anyone who would be a good fit for the following roles, please encourage them to apply.

Associate Director of Family Ministry: Infant through Kindergarten

Oversees ministry to Third's children and families with particular focus on supervising nursery and preschool age children; seeks to equip, encourage and support parents in being the primary disciplers of their children.

Associate Director of Parish Ministry

Provides regular support and direction for Parish Ministry, helps recruit, motivate, train and supporting teams of Parish leaders in missional ministry; helps direct Women's ministry, and Newcomers and Hospitality ministry.

Our search process is available and open to all qualified candidates from within and outside the church body. We look forward and pray for the Lord to lead us to the candidate that best fits the position. For full job descriptions and info on applying: thirdrva.org/employment.

LESSONS & CAROLS

GATHERING TOGETHER TO SING THE ADVENT STORY

WHEN: Sunday, December 8
4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

WHERE: Sanctuary

Each year Third Church marks the beginning of Advent with our service of Lessons and Carols. This year, we'll have two opportunities for our church family to attend this special service, December 8 at 4:00 and 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. Take one hour to slow down, to listen to Scripture that speaks of God's power at work in the world, to sing the story of Jesus, to prepare your heart to welcome our Savior. We'll not only listen to the story, but participate in it as well.

Lessons and Carols tells God's beautiful story of creation, fall, redemption, and re-creation through the reading of Scripture and the singing of traditional and modern carols. We use a variety of instruments and musical styles to prepare our hearts to celebrate the first coming of Jesus and to anticipate that day when he will come again.

All are welcome. Childcare will be available for children ages kindergarten and younger for the 4:00 p.m. service only.

**Children are welcome to attend this service with their parents, but please keep in mind that while this service does have elements of group participation, there is also time for sitting and being still as we hear the scriptures read.*

"The Lord is coming, always coming. When you have ears to hear and eyes to see, you will recognize him at any moment of your life. Life is Advent; life is recognizing the coming of the Lord."

– Henri Nouwen



Family Challenges and Support Communities

In an effort to continue to support our families and build community around the ways we disciple and raise our children, we are organizing a new system of support. We all face unique challenges in parenting – sometimes for a season and sometimes for longer.

AUTISM: No matter where your child is on the spectrum, an autism diagnosis brings many questions and concerns. Brook Tribble would be happy to talk and pray with you. Contact her at bwtribble@gmail.com.

PHYSICAL AND MENTAL DISABILITY: Margarete & Kevin Jeffer have walked along the cerebral palsy road with their son, Nick. They have been the leaders for the Mosaic ministry at Third, and have connections with those who can help with IEPs, Down Syndrome and other disabilities. For prayer and support, contact them at margaretejeffer@verizon.net and kjeffer@recreativeinc.com.

MISCARRIAGE AND INFERTILITY: Shiloh is a ministry that was started to care for the women and men who are grieving the loss of an unborn baby, or longing for a child yet to be conceived. Holly Roper leads this ministry and would be happy to pray with you and support you: hollydroper@gmail.com.

We want to help connect you with others in our community who can support you as you navigate the unique circumstances you're in. Here we've listed names and contact info for those in our community who are ready to listen, answer your questions, pray alongside you, and offer resources.

MARRIAGE COUNSELING AND MENTORING: Third supports couples who are in need of counseling, just a “tune up,” or desire to be mentored by a couple from Third who is further down the marriage road. Please contact Ed Satterfield who can set up mentoring or counseling for you: eds@thirdrva.org.

FOSTER CARE AND ADOPTION: Forgotten No More is a new ministry at Third aimed at captivating hearts and building community to respond to God's call to care for orphans, foster children, and their families. For support, resources, and prayer, contact Missy Murchie at murchiefamily@yahoo.com.

INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION: The process of international adoption can be long and tedious. If you would like support and prayer as you walk this road, contact Sunny Rosebro at sunny.rosebro@gmail.com.

FINANCIAL CHALLENGES: Money issues are the leading cause of stress in marriages. Third has been offering Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace class for several years. To talk to someone about this class or financial pressures you may be facing, contact Connie and Keith Byers: conniepbyers@gmail.com and keithabyers@gmail.com.

DYSLEXIA: As children learn to read, signs of dyslexia may become evident and can be overwhelming. If you would have questions, would like prayer or guidance, please contact Noel Raggio: nraggio@comcast.net

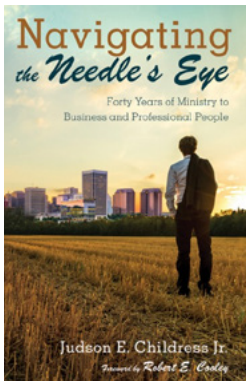
SEIZURE DISORDER: Navigating the diagnosis and treatment options for seizure disorder is a nerve-racking process. For prayer and support, contact Ann Blair Higgins: abhigginsl@gmail.com.

For any questions or specific needs not covered here, contact Kathy White: kathyw@thirdrva.org.

LOCAL MISSION SPOTLIGHT

Changing the Workplace Through God's Teachings

BY CYNTHIA CAVE



In his new book, Judson E. Childress, Jr., Executive Director and Founder of Needle's Eye Ministries and longtime member of Third Church, not only tells his story about creating a marketplace ministry in Richmond but also provides guidance for persons to change their workplace cultures by practicing their faith on the job. *Navigating the Needle's Eye: Forty Years of Ministry to Business*

and Professional People describes applying Christian values at work that touch believers and unbelievers. Buddy Childress did not set out to write a book about ministry for marketplace people. In fact, he did not set out to be a minister at all. During college he was planning on a business career. God had other plans.

Buddy watched his father rise from poverty to become a self-made business success. Pursuing similar success seemed a natural focus. Carrying out his plan, Buddy worked for two Fortune 500 companies when a Sunday visit to church to fulfill a promise to his wife was the catalyst that changed his life. A sermon by a young minister just out of seminary touched his heart and made sense of the love of God and the Spirit of Jesus like nothing else in church ever had. This dramatic experience was followed by regular conversations and mentoring with the new minister. As he sought answers to his questions, the person of Christ was no longer a concept to him but became a living relationship, part of his personal life and directing his life.

Books may be purchased directly from the Needle's Eye Ministries office at 104 Berrington Court, Richmond, Virginia, 23221, at a reduced rate of \$19.00.

The change in his life led to selling his home, leaving business, and moving to Massachusetts to attend Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. After his first semester, over a two-week period, he began to sense that God was leading him to begin a ministry to business and professional people. His wife had also been hearing the same thing from the Lord. His advisor concurred. He changed degree programs in order to better prepare for this unique ministry. Upon completion, Buddy and his wife Laura returned to Richmond and founded Needle's Eye Ministries. The mission statement of Needle's Eye Ministries has not changed: "Connecting marketplace men and women to life-changing faith in Jesus—encouraging them to impact their workplaces and our community with his values, ethics, and love."

Needle's Eye Ministries accomplishes its mission by presenting the message of salvation in Christ, encouraging living out faith in Jesus, providing Christ-centered biblical teaching, small group opportunities, and a variety of other outreach means. Events such as speakers' series with presentations by notable Christian leaders sharing faith stories or addressing current business issues through the filter of faith are part of its programs. Needle's Eye offers nearly 60 ongoing small groups for all levels and stages of work life, from entry level to company presidents to retirees. Each group becomes a source of learning, support, and friendships.

Just as he responded to God's urging to focus on the working world for his ministry, Buddy responded to the urging of a colleague and friend to write a book that would capture the transformational work of Needle's Eye. *Navigating the Needle's Eye* tells the story of (in Buddy's words) "God's faithfulness to a family, a ministry, a marketplace, and a community. My goal in writing it was to show how He has led and blessed us (our Board, staff, and countless volunteers) in so many ways to serve as His hands and feet in my hometown of Richmond. It concludes with an exciting look into the future of Needle's Eye."

When Buddy talks about Third Church, his eyes light up. Third has provided ongoing financial support for Needle's Eye since 1982, and increased it over the years. But much more than money has been given, Third has been a home for Buddy and his family for years, providing youth ministry that his children benefited from immensely in their formative years. There have been opportunities to serve in various capacities, and lasting friendships have ensued. Several current and past members of the Board of Needle's Eye are also members of Third. Interwoven and multilayered, support by Third Church has sustained the Childress family and has been constant as the ministry has grown.

FORGOTTEN NO MORE

Forgotten No More is celebrating two years since we launched in November 2017! We praise God for the ways he has answered prayers and continue to boldly ask him for the Holy Spirit to provide more adoptive and foster families for children in our community. We have a few upcoming events in which we'd love to have the Third family participate.



STAND SUNDAY

WHEN: Sunday, November 10

This is a day that churches across the country come together to stand up for vulnerable children and their families. Forgotten No More will have a table of resources available for you to check out as well as kick off our collection of Christmas Store items! We are collecting new items that Henrico County foster children will be able to pick to give as gifts for their families. Suggested items include Board games, spa items for moms, books, hats/gloves/scarves, craft or household items. Wrapping supplies have been donated.

FOSTER CARE EVENT

WHEN: Monday, December 2 from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Tuckahoe Library will be hosting this informational event and sponsored by Intertwined Family (WEAG). Agencies such as VA Kids Belong, HopeTree, UMFS and Henrico County will present about their programs.

CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE

WHEN: Saturday, December 7 from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

This will be a wonderful way to serve the foster families of Henrico County! Third will have a Christmas Store for the children to choose gifts for their families, a photographer to take professional pictures of each child, a cookie decorating station, a Christmas craft, and brunch for the foster parents. We would love to have several parish groups take the lead on each of these areas. If you're interested in your parish group participating or would like more information, please reach out to Missy Murchie at forgottennomore@thirdrva.org

GREGG AND KATHRYN DONLEY



On November 17, the Donley's will be joining us in all three services. We'll also be hosting a lunch presentation in Room 101 after the 11:15 a.m. service.

Gregg and Kathryn Donley have served the Lord with WEC International (Worldwide Evangelization for Christ) in the Arab Muslim world since 1990. They have four grown sons and have served primarily in church planting (evangelism, discipleship, leadership training) and have pioneered numerous ministry platforms as well as worked with the unreached people groups—the Bedouin since 1993, and the Yazedi since 2014.

They relocated to the US after an injury of their second son (USMC) in Afghanistan. Gregg makes regular trips back to the Middle East and is involved with the Yazedi people group and refugees in northern Iraq. They are now heading up a new ministry focus for WEC International, reaching Syrian and Iraqi refugees along their migration routes in the Middle East and Europe.

Gregg regularly travels to Jordan, Greece, Turkey, Lebanon and Germany and has been involved in evangelism, discipleship, leadership development, aid distribution and developing church-planting ministries among various refugee populations in numerous locations. A secondary focus has been on identifying, cultivating and networking ministry opportunities for short and long-term workers. The goal is to educate, challenge, motivate, inspire, and mobilize the Church during this critical and unprecedented time of open doors and windows in the Muslim world.



LOCAL MISSION SPOTLIGHT

CAC POTLUCK

WHEN: Saturday, November 23, from 12:00 – 2:00 p.m.

WHERE: 1701 Cardwell Rd, Crozier, VA 23039

This year we are joining with our Christian Arabic Church brothers and sisters for a pre-Thanksgiving Potluck Feast! The CAC is so excited to host us out at their Goochland property, which is especially beautiful this time of year. Their members have been hard at work on many improvements to their grounds. You're invited to "Come Walk with Jesus" along a recently completed a 1/2 mile Prayer Trail with scripture written in four different languages posted all along the way. There is also a new soccer field and volleyball court where we can have some friendly competitions. There will be games for all the children and youth, including face-painting! This will be a potluck Thanksgiving lunch feast, so please bring any favorite dish to share. This should make for a wonderful variety of foods between our two cultures. We'll have a bonfire and s'mores for dessert after our meal.

**Please make plans to enjoy time with
our Egyptian friends and celebrate
all of God's blessings together!**

Dear Third Church family,

Thank you so much for your love and support to my family and I at the loss of my husband. You surrounded us with such kindness and compassion. We know many helped with the funeral service and reception. Thank you!

A special word of thanks to Kathy White who stood by my side the last three years of my husband's illness. She also coordinated all the details of the funeral service and reception with such love and grace.

God bless you.

Love,

Hala Hishan

THAILAND



Third is sending a team of five to Thailand November 3–14 to provide teaching for pastors serving in rural areas in closed countries—or countries where Christian evangelism is unlawful.

Churches in these areas, where congregants meet in secret, are sometimes referred to as underground churches. Fulfilling the Great Commission in these countries is challenging, but not impossible. Some of the pastors will provide teaching for may have been persecuted, imprisoned, or faced torture for preaching the gospel and/or running an underground church. Just because a country is closed to missionaries and churches doesn't mean they are closed to the gospel. The gospel flourishes during persecution; it spreads through relationships, and this is where the phrase "creative access" comes into play. Many of the pastors we'll meet with are businessmen and women who lead churches secretly.

Third mission partner International Cooperating Ministries (ICM) is coordinating this trip and will be outfitting the attending pastors with multiple resources to help them lead their congregations.

THIRD CHURCH TEACHERS AND THEIR TOPICS

- Gina Maio, MDiv: "*Women of the Bible*"
- Stephanie Black, PhD (Third mission partner): "*Study of Colossians*"
- Ed Satterfield, MDiv: "*The Gospel of Grace*"
- LJ Jaworski, MA Missions: "*Leadership: Study of the Lives of Joseph and Paul*"
- Geof Stiff, MSM: "*Mini Bible College: How to Lead a Weekly Bible Study*"

While we value your prayers for the team, we also covet your prayers for those who are scheduled to attend. Please pray that there aren't any challenges as they leave their countries. Pray for protection for the pastors (both male and female) as well as their families. Pray that they have a great experience at this training retreat, that they learn much, that they encounter God, and that they rest. Please note that last names and closed country locations have been left out for the safety of those serving overseas. As you pray, remember: God knows each name, even if you do not. Thank you for your prayers.

COMMUNITY POSTINGS

AUTHOR BOOK SIGNING AND COFFEE MARKED & SEALED



Third's Covenant Partner, Lori Farrar Booker, has just released her journal, *Marked & Sealed*. Join us for coffee and light refreshments at Lori Farrar Booker's upcoming RVA book signing!

WHEN: Friday, November 22, 2019
9:30 – 11:00 a.m.

WHERE: Shore Dog Café in Tuckahoe Shopping Center
435 North Ridge Road

A portion of the proceeds will benefit Third Church RVA Deacon's Fund for those in need.

"At its very root, Christianity is not about religion, but relationship. By giving us a window into her own personal relationship with Jesus, Lori invites us to know more deeply the person, power and grace of Jesus for ourselves. Read and find life here!"

— Corey Widmer

Preorder at lorifarrarbooker.com/marked-and-sealed or visit her website at lorifarrarbooker.com or Facebook page at facebook.com/lorifarrarbooker to learn more about her story.

TOYS NEEDED! CARE 2 SHARE USED TOY DRIVE

The Care 2 Share Used Toy Drive collects new and gently used, like-new toys, and delivers them to children in need throughout the metro Richmond area at Christmas. Last year, through the generous participation of Third Church and others, Care 2 Share wrapped and, with the help of the Richmond City Police Department, delivered toys, books, and stuffed animals to over 400 children within all four precincts.

Donations of children's books, toys, and stuffed animals are being accepted now through November 23, for the 2019 holiday season. We are also looking for some volunteers who are willing to donate their time to wrap and tag gifts on workshop days.

ALL DONATIONS SHOULD MEET THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

- Each toy should be in a bag or box containing all its parts.
- Each toy should be clean, appear to be new, and in good working order.

DONATIONS CAN BE DROPPED OFF AS FOLLOWS:

- Place donations in the Care 2 Share box next to Room 109 near the Fellowship Hall.
- Contact Carolyn Lilly at carolynlilly@comcast.net or 804-564-7145 to arrange a pick-up or drop-off.



HEALING PRAYER ROOMS

What might a doctor, realtor, IT professional, retired college administrator, homemaker, chaplain, and retired pharmacist all have in common? They have witnessed miraculous, divine healing. And they all serve as trained prayer ministers for Richmond Prayer and Healing Rooms (RPHR) housed at Third Church on the first and third Thursday nights, from 6:30–8:00 p.m.

In the two RPHR locations in the Richmond area, prayer partners have witnessed healing for cancer, rheumatoid arthritis, joint, digestive and respiratory problems, some broken hearts, and much more. “Once you’ve seen divine healing,” says one of our team members, “it changes your understanding of God’s power and grace.”

After all, God’s will for healing appears repeatedly in Scripture. The Old Testament contains over forty passages with healing promises (Ex. 15:26, Ps. 107:20, Pr. 3:1-8, Isa. 58:8, Jer. 30:17). And healing miracles were central to Jesus’ ministry when He walked with us; the Gospels are filled with 27 of His medical miracles, and many accounts of Jesus – and then His apostles – “healing all who were sick” (Mat. 4:23, Mat. 14:14, Mk. 6:56, Lk. 4:40, Acts 10:38).

RPHR prayer team members are motivated by Jesus’ instruction to “lay hands on the sick and they will recover” (Mk 16:18). When we pray for the sick (Mat. 10:1), we see God work in their lives – and in our lives as well.

So if you have a medical challenge, or any other concern needing prayer, stop by the Youth Ministry area, just past the children’s library, any first or third Thursday, between 6:30 and 8:00 p.m. – no appointment needed. You will receive prayer from 2 or 3 trained prayer partners in a private room. We share Scripture on God’s love, His promises, and we pray for healing. And very often we see it – spiritual, emotional, relational and physical healing. Once you’ve seen it, you, too, will want to pass it on.

WHEN: 1st and 3rd Thursdays, from 6:30–8:00 p.m.

Prayer Team available to pray for healing

October 17; November 7, 21; December 5
Resuming February 6, 2020

WHERE: Third Church, Student Ministry Area

For further information, contact Dena Nelson at denamnelson@yahoo.com.

UPCOMING BAPTISMS

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10

10:00 A.M. Ann Bradley Brown, daughter of Scottie and David Brown (Grove Parish)

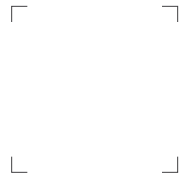
Anne Amory Tuite, daughter of Ashley and Tyler Tuite (Grove Parish)

11:15 A.M. Rowan Thomas Reynolds, son of Caitlin and Keith Reynolds (City South Parish)

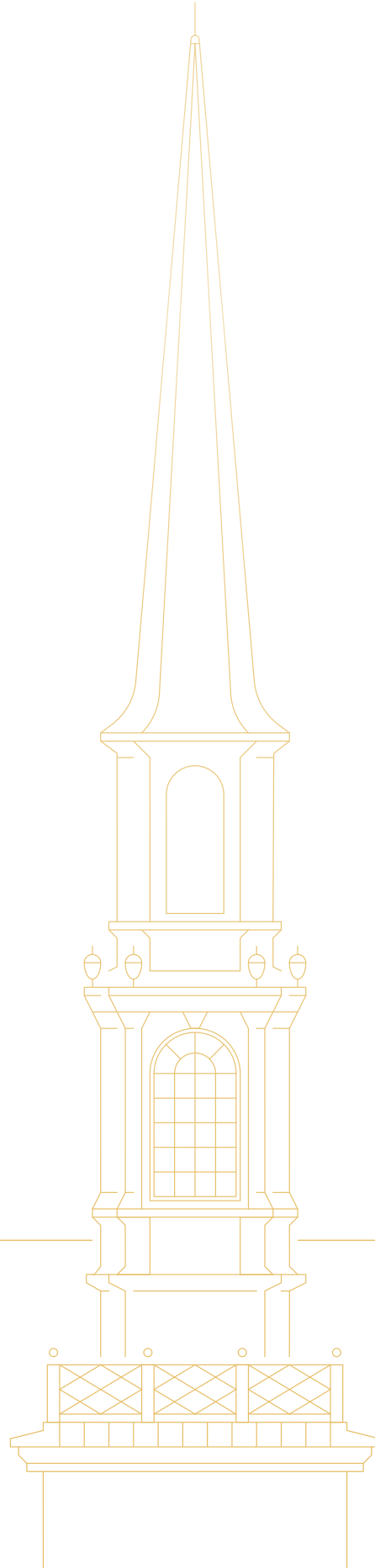
In this monthly feature in the Press, we share the scheduled baptisms and dedications for the upcoming month. As a church family, we know it’s important for you to be able to attend these sacraments for people within your community, your parish area, or perhaps a new friend you recently met. We hope this gives you the insight you need so you can plan to bear witness to these special occasions in our services.



THIRD CHURCH
500 FOREST AVE.
RICHMOND, VA 23229
(804) 282-4645



Called together for
the renewal of all things
through Jesus Christ.



THIRDRVA.ORG

December Third Press Deadline: Friday, November 15. Submit to: beccap@thirdrva.org.