

ThirdPRESS

OCTOBER 2019

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Entrusted



"Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand."
1 Chronicles 29:14

When Christians hear the word "stewardship," the first thing that likely comes to mind is church budgets. The idea of stewardship is connected to that time of year when the pastor trots out the financial numbers and talks about the importance of giving. For us, that usually happens in October and early November, when we are entering into the final quarter of the current year and our Session is planning the budget for the following one. That's necessary and important spiritual work! Yet, if this is the only activity that we associate with "stewardship," we are far from the biblical understanding of that word.

The English word "steward" comes from the 11th Century, and referred to an official who controlled the domestic affairs of a household. It comes from the roots "sty" (house or part of a house) and "ward" (keeper), literally meaning "keeper of the house." A steward was the person that the owner put in charge over the domestic affairs of what he owned. Randy Alcorn writes, "A steward manages assets for the owner's benefit. The steward carries no sense of entitlement to the assets he manages. It's his job to find out what the owner wants done with his assets, then carry out his will."

In the Biblical worldview, God is the creator and owner of everything. Not just money and the ability to create it, but everything, period. The ground we walk on, the food we eat, the bodies we inhabit, the abilities we employ, the air we breathe. Everything. Which means *your entire life* is stewardship, because in the end nothing belongs to you, everything belongs to God. To be a "steward" is one of the most fundamental aspects of our identity.

BEGINNING OCTOBER 20, for six Sundays we are going to explore this big picture, Genesis to Revelation, vision of biblical stewardship. Before you groan, you might be glad to know that we are only going to talk about money and finances for one of those six weeks! That's just how important, broad and all-encompassing this topic of stewardship is. In addition to our money, we'll be exploring what it means to steward creation, our vocations, abilities, time, talents, and the gospel itself.

Our prayer is that God would use this season to make us into joyful, grateful stewards for all of life. In the words of Tom Maclellan:

"I consecrate all that I am and all that I have, the faculties of my mind, the members of my body, my worldly possessions, my time, and my influence over others, all to be used entirely for Thy glory and resolutely employed in obedience to Thy commands as long as Thou continuest me in life."

Here are two ways you can take part in this special season:

✔ Pick up an Entrusted Devotional.

This 6-week daily devotional was written for the people of Third as we journey through our study of stewardship. We'll look at stewardship from Genesis to Revelation, exploring the many gifts and resources the Lord has entrusted us with, and uncovering what he calls us to do with them.

DEVOTIONALS WILL BE AVAILABLE IN THE CHURCH STARTING ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 20.

✔ Participate in Faith Commitment Sunday.

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.

JOIN US FOR THIS TIME ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 3.

Our prayer is that God would use this season to make us into joyful, grateful stewards for all of life.

PARISH AREA GATHERINGS

RECAP



On September 8, each of our twelve parish areas hosted a parish-wide picnic for the purpose of having neighbors get to know one another.

About 630 people came out across the metro Richmond area in total. Most of the things we have always hoped for in parish life were on display. The gatherings were intergenerational, full of babies, toddlers, kids, and married and single adults of all ages. The weather was great, the food was delicious, and all kinds of fun and fellowship were happening across Richmond!



Find your parish area:
thirdrva.org/parish-life

Becoming Witnessing Communities

Many people have asked, *What will Parish Groups focus on this fall?* The shortest way to answer that question is: *Sermon Discussions and Spiritual Conversations.*

The first Sunday of each month, most groups will be connecting with God together through guided sermon discussions developed alongside the Sunday sermon series. Biblical preaching has long been one of our core values, and God has blessed us here at Third with gifted communicators. We hope these guided discussions will help all of us to apply the word together, into every nook and cranny of our lives.

The third Sunday of each month, we will be focusing on *Spiritual Conversations in the Digital Age*. At the core of spiritual conversations is an idea of “Gracious Adaptation.” In Colossians 4:5–6, the Apostle Paul wrote, “Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.” Come join us as we learn to adapt our conversations to meet our seeking friends right where they are in their spiritual journeys.



RETIREMENTS ON OUR THIRD CHURCH STAFF

It is with sadness that we report to our church family that Kathy White and Beth Nichols will be retiring from their roles on staff at Third in the coming new year. They have both been great servants of Christ and this body and we will greatly miss them in their staff capacities.

KATHY WHITE has served as Associate Director of Family Ministry, focusing on children from birth to Kindergarten, since 2011. Kathy looks forward to joint retirement with her husband Randall and will end her role in Family Ministry at the end of February 2020.

BETH MARRIOTT has served as Director of Connections Ministry, working with our Newcomers Class, Welcome Coffees, and helping people get connected at Third. She also has been the staff liaison for Women's Ministry and has been fully engaged with Parish Life from its conception through to the present. She looks forward to her retirement with her husband Phil as well and will conclude her work at the end of January 2020. This will end eighteen years of faithful service to Christ and the Third family.

We are grateful to both Kathy and Beth for using their considerable gifts for many years, helping shape life at Third. We will miss the unique ways that they have invested in the lives of many. Their particular impact cannot be replaced and will be felt as a loss to many. We do rejoice, however, that they will remain as active Covenant Partners at Third.

We also want to use this opportunity to ask you to pray for the search for their replacements over the next few months. There will be minor adjustments to the responsibilities as we hire new persons to come into these roles. Beth's replacement will have an even greater focus on equipping and supporting our leaders for Parish ministry, hence a new title for the position as Associate Director for Parish Ministry.

Be on the lookout for a time to celebrate Beth and Kathy's years of service to Third in the new year. We commend them for their faithful work here at Third, and will be excited to see how God uses them in their next chapters.

2ND GRADE DINNER BIBLE PRESENTATION

Sunday, October 20

5:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall

One of Third's Faith Milestones is the 2nd grade Bible Presentation. Each year 2nd grade students and their families are invited to share a meal together and to hear a message on the importance of God's word in their lives. We'll also have the opportunity to worship together and each 2nd grade student will be presented with an inscribed Adventure Bible. You don't want to miss this very special evening.

RSVP by emailing Tracie Meadows (traciem@thirdrva.org) no later than October 14, so that we have time to have the Bibles inscribed.





World Communion Sunday

OCTOBER 6

Congregations from all over the globe, and from several denominations, celebrate World Communion Sunday on the first Sunday of October.

This year, Third Church will join these bodies of believers on October 6 by partaking of the sacrament with some additional reminders of our participation in the global church.



God has given us a unique superpower, the ability to bring about positive change through our prayers. When it comes to the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16–20), we all have a part to play. Some of us are called to go! Some of us are called to send, welcome, mobilize. All of us are called to pray and to learn. OMF prepared a video series that is used in the Perspectives classes entitled *6 Ways to Reach God's World* (omf.org/us/6-ways). Please take a look at these short videos in preparation for October 6th, World Communion Sunday and the Pray for the Nations event in Fellowship Hall. There you will have the opportunity to pray, while standing on a large floor map, for people around the world using prayer guides.

In the sanctuary you will notice a vividly colored and patterned tablecloth on the communion table and some pastors wearing liturgical vestments or stoles with the same grab-your-attention appearance. Textiles from Australia, Cameroon, England, Estonia, Finland, France, Guatemala, Indonesia, Japan, Nigeria, Russia, Scotland, Tanzania, the United States and Zimbabwe were cut up and sewn back together to remind us of both our global diversity and unity as believers in Christ. Creating in collaboration gave seamstresses Holly Smith, Aurelia Hassler, Maia Kling, Susan Rawls and Peg Shealy an opportunity to work together to bless our local church family while thinking about the greater global church.

Come and pray for the nations on Sunday, October 6, 8:45 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

COLLEGE AND ADULT MEXICO MISSION TRIP

JUNE 28 – JULY 4, 2020

Since 2007, Third Student Ministry has made regular trips to Mexico (2007, 2008, 2011, 2014, 2016, and 2018) and this summer we have felt called by God to once again go to the area near Tijuana, Mexico with Amor Ministries (amor.org). Amor believes that *“God has called us to keep families together. As we carry out this mission, we realize that building a house doesn’t just provide shelter. It builds a foundation for the future.”*

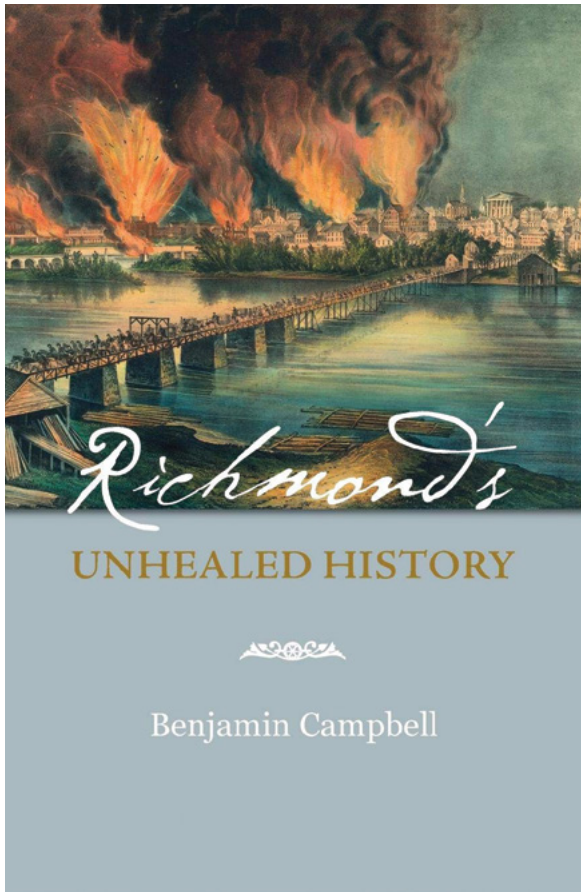
Over these years it has been our hope to have a team of college students and adults come alongside the Student Ministry team. We would be at base camp together, eat together, and worship together but have separate teams on work sites: a college and adult team and a student ministry team. The main goal: to build not just one, but at least two houses for Mexican families in need. The trip this year is June 28–July 4, 2020.

WHAT DO WE NEED FROM YOU?

- ✓ A commitment and application submission by Sunday, November 17th.
- ✓ In order to have enough people to build one house, we need at least fifteen people on the team.
- ✓ As you think about joining us on this trip we ask that you consider two things. 1) Is God calling me to do this? 2) Am I committed to making this trip a top priority in my life as I prepare for it?

We thank you for prayerfully considering joining us to serve our Mexican friends and neighbors this coming summer. Should you have questions about the trip or if you’d like an application, contact Rick Hutton (rickh@thirdrva.org) or Andrea Woie (andreaw@thirdrva.org).





Richmond's Unhealed History

JASON SNOOK / LJ JAWORSKI

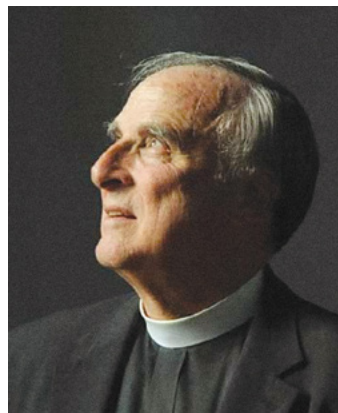
God has called us together for the renewal of all things in Jesus Christ. And if you live in one of our twelve parish areas, that means God has called us together for the renewal of Richmond. To understand what is happening in Richmond is to take part in a conversation that is literally hundreds of years old. Conversations about schools, transportation, politics, taxes, and race today are all set against the backdrop of the history of our region.

The critical problem is, far too many people know far too little about this history and how it shapes and forms our present. This year, with the 400-year remembrance of African slaves first arriving in Virginia, a conversation about Richmond's unhealed history is as crucial as ever. Reverend Ben Campbell wrote a book by this name back in 2011 and it remains "required reading" for anyone desiring to understand the historical context of many of the issues we face in Richmond today.

We've invited Ben Campbell to come to Third on *Friday, November 1 from 7:00-9:00 p.m.* to share his reflections on Richmond in 2019. This will be a time of learning, discussion, and prayer as we seek a greater understanding of our region and our place in it as followers of Jesus Christ.

In the lead up to this, we will be offering Rev. Campbell's book along with a study guide we've created so everyone can learn more. You can read the book individually, with your family or with a group.

We'll offer an introduction to the study guide in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday, October 13 at 11:15 a.m. Books and guides will be available on October 6 and 27 in the Courtyard.



LOCAL MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

On Sunday morning, October 27, we are also hosting a Local Missions Fair in the Fellowship Hall. This will be a chance for us to meet our local mission partners, connect with those serving there, and find ways to serve alongside them. Mark your calendars and plan to join us between services and show support for those serving in our community.





GUIDED TOUR OF THE BIBLE

The Guided Tour is designed to help you get familiar with the Bible, making it easy to understand any section of Scripture. Class times address the things you want to know, flowing from the observations and questions you have as you read ahead in assigned sections of the Bible.

Ed Satterfield authored the Guided Tour as short 5 week studies of one section of the Bible. There are 10 studies in all, five for the Old Testament and five for the New. You can join the tour for just 5 weeks and take any study in any order but our hope is that at some point you will take them all. The only homework required is to read a short assigned section of the Bible each day, noting your questions and observations.

THE 10 GUIDED TOUR CLASSES ARE:

- 📖 **OLD TESTAMENT:** Pentateuch, Historical Books, Poets, Prophets (before Israel's exile), Prophets (after exile)
- 📖 **NEW TESTAMENT:** Gospels, Acts of the Apostles, Letters of Paul, Non-Pauline Letters, Revelation of John

THE NEXT GUIDED TOUR: OCTOBER 17 – NOVEMBER 14

Studying: *The Acts of the Apostles*

Meet: Thursday evenings from 7:00-8:30 p.m. in Room 217.

Join anytime! Please contact Sterling Lloyd in the church office (804-282-4645 ext. 115, sterlingl@thirdrva.org) to let her know you'd like to attend so she can be sure to have all the materials ready for your use in time for the class.

Q COMMONS

CREATE A BETTER FUTURE IN RICHMOND

Thursday, October 24

7:00 – 9:00 p.m., The Byrd Theatre

As a community seeking “the renewal of all things through Jesus Christ,” we have an opportunity to broaden our imaginations for what a renewed future may look like and the habits to help us work towards it. On October 24, thoughtful leaders from across our city will gather for Q Commons, a uniquely local and global event that will empower us to advance good in Richmond—and we hope you'll join us. The evening will include talks from three local presenters who will educate us about the issues most relevant to our city, as well as talks from:

- 🗣️ Journalist and author **MALCOLM GLADWELL**, who will help us understand how we can create a better future for our neighbors.
- 🗣️ Pastor and author **FRANCIS CHAN**, who will inspire us to create a better future by building true community.
- 🗣️ Author **REBEKAH LYONS**, who was just with us in Richmond this September. She will equip us with four life-giving rhythms that lead to improved mental health and a better future for our own lives.

To learn more about Q, the organization we're partnering with to host this event, visit their website at qideas.org. In a divided world where there are plenty of problems to solve, let's be part of the solution.

JOIN US! Find more event details and secure your ticket, please visit: qcommons.com/Richmond.

Mission Partner Spotlight

“Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” With these words Jesus called Simon and Andrew to follow Him. Is God calling Kerem, from Turkey, in a similar way today? After an encounter with a priest and repeated dreams, Kerem is looking for answers and has shared his story with SAT-7 TÜRK.

Despite not being a Christian, on a visit to Ephesus, Kerem found himself praying at a church. After some time, one of the priests addressed Kerem personally: “He told me that there was something different about me, and that someday, I would be with them and become one of their brothers.” Surprised, and put on the spot among his friends, Kerem laughed it off, dismissing the comment.

“Why on earth would I follow Christ?”, he thought. Time passed, but Kerem was not able to forget the events in Ephesus, and soon after, he had a dream.

We’ve printed here an article that appeared in one of SAT-7’s recent newsletters. It illustrates the amazing work that is going on through this satellite ministry.

THE MISSION OF SAT-7 “is to provide the churches and Christians of the Middle East and North Africa an opportunity to witness to Jesus Christ through inspirational, informative and educational television services.”

“In my dream, Jesus Christ handed me a fishing rod. He told me to leave the lake I was at and to go to another lake to go fishing with Him. So, I went to the other lake and began fishing with Jesus,” Kerem explains. “I caught a fish, inside the fish were four coins.”

Because of this dream and his encounter with the priest, Kerem started looking for answers. Discovering SAT-7 TÜRK, he began watching the programs and wrote to the channel to ask the questions burning on his heart.

“What do all these dreams mean? Why are these things happening to me? Please pray for me.”

Please pray for Kerem, and people like him in Turkey, who are hearing God calling them. Pray that they will respond like Simon and Andrew did, when they heard Jesus call to follow Him. (Mathew 4:19)

LEARN MORE ABOUT SAT-7

On October 27, Ray Henien from SAT-7 will provide a broader picture of the scope of this ministry and what God is doing in the Middle East and North Africa.

JOIN US at 12:30 p.m. in Room 101 on the 27th. We’ll have a chance to feast on a delicious meal, hear about this ministry and ask questions. Mark your calendars and plan to attend!



A REMEMBRANCE OF

Myrtle Hacker

BY DONALD MARSDEN

Standing at the door of room 105, Myrtle Hacker greeted us with her warm smile on the first Sunday of October in 1989, as we dropped off our daughter at the three-year old Sunday school class. She always stood stalwartly at the half open Dutch door, then opened the bottom half to welcome in the children, like a shepherdess lovingly gathering sheep into her fold. For years Myrtle volunteered to teach and care for young children at Third. In my work as the pastor in charge children's ministry, Myrtle was one of the people on whom I could always count.

After a few years Myrtle stopped teaching Sunday School. Every Wednesday night she was in the church kitchen helping Roseanne Adams cook dinner for about 150 people. Her sons David and James got in there with her to help washing pots and dishes.

By Third Church standards, Myrtle lived very humbly. She was the single mother of three boys. Two of her sons lived with her in an apartment she rented on Quioccasin Road about a half a mile from Regency Mall. She worked at Food Lion in the deli department where she had to stand long hours on

a concrete floor serving customers. She never drove a car. She either walked or found a ride with others.

In many ways, Myrtle lived a tough life. She didn't pretend it was otherwise. Standing on the concrete floor at Food Lion made her feet sore and tired. She told me about it. When I asked whether she had told the managers about it, she said she had, but they didn't do much. Myrtle did not hide her frustrations in life. She didn't dwell on them either. After telling me what bothered her, she lifted her head, took a breath and said "Well, I guess that's the way things go, isn't it?" And then she would smile and get back to work. Myrtle refused to be a victim. She was a contributor.

Years went by. Our family moved to Russia for eleven years. When we returned, Myrtle was still helping out in the kitchen. Every Sunday she was in worship with one of her sons, James or David. One Sunday I saw Myrtle's name under "prayer concerns" in the bulletin. She had suffered a stroke. When I went to see her, I found her in the rehabilitation room doing her exercises. She looked somewhat bewildered. Not everything she said made sense.

Not much later she was back in church. She was moving more slowly than before, not standing quite so tall. One Sunday after worship I saw Myrtle shuffling toward me from behind her walker. She got right in my face with her big smile. "How're you?" What struck me was that her joy had returned, and had not diminished.

It was this undiminished joy in Myrtle that kept me from noticing that she was 85 years old. Her indomitable spirit made me think she would keep going forever. That's why I was taken by surprise when I heard that Myrtle had died.

Myrtle lived well. Her decision to be joyful in the face of life's unfairness prepared her well for the kingdom of God into which she has passed. One of the prophets has said, "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Isaiah 35:10. Myrtle has entered into the joy of that kingdom. She is resting from her labors and singing praises to the King. Thanks be to God for Myrtle Hacker.

AMERICA: MISSION FIELD OR BATTLE GROUND?

HOW SHOULD WE ENGAGE IN A POST-CHRISTIAN CULTURE?

A Joseph's Way Seminar

Saturday, October 19

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at Third Church

Christians in America are facing more and more cultural and legal challenges to their faith. How should churches and other ministries equip believers to engage people in a culture that is increasingly hostile to traditional Christian beliefs?

This seminar will discuss topics affecting Christian families (policies in schools), current and proposed state laws affecting schools and churches, court rulings affecting Christian employers and employees, cases affecting ministries on college campuses, and important topics for churches and Christian organizations (employment practices, governance, policies for youth and children, overseas funding, and more). We plan to have a lunch after from 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. for concerned Christians, pastors, and church and ministry leaders to discuss practical ways of equipping Christians to face an increasingly challenging culture.

Questions? Contact Steve Hall: stevhall2003@gmail.com.

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.*

UPCOMING BAPTISMS

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13

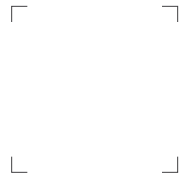
10:00 A.M. *Baby Dedication:* Sophie Ellen Aufer, daughter of Lauren and Bryce Aufer (Gayton Parish)

11:15 A.M. Mary Mason Spottswood Roper, daughter of Holly and Tommy Roper (Grove Parish)

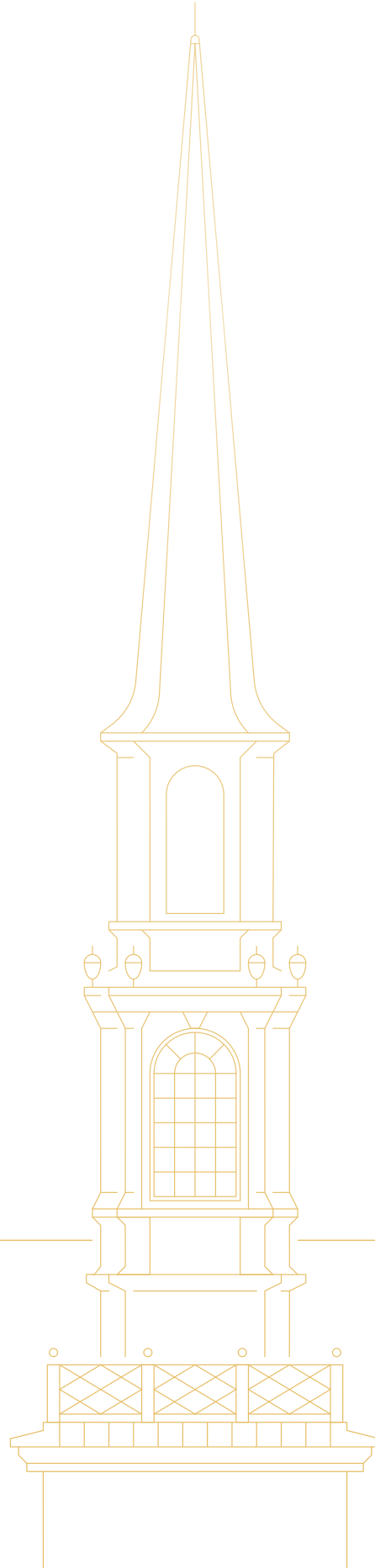
In this monthly feature in the Press, we share the scheduled baptisms and dedications for the upcoming month. As a church family, we know it's important for you to be able to attend these sacraments for people within your community, your parish area, or perhaps a new friend you recently met. We hope 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.



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