

Welcome!

We're glad you're here.

Stop by the Welcome Desk downstairs to learn more about Third Church, find ways to connect to our community, and ask any questions that you may have.

PRELUDE

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

CALL TO WORSHIP | FROM ISAIAH 2

- › Advent means coming.
We light this candle as a sign of the coming light of Christ.
- » **We are preparing ourselves for the days
when the nations shall beat their swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning hooks.**
- › Nations shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war anymore.
- » **Let us walk in the light of the Lord.**

PRAYER OF ADORATION

"O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL"

"CHRIST IS LOWER STILL"

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

- › O promised Christ: We are a world at war.
- » **Our peace depends on your coming.**
- › We are a sinful people.
- » **Our pardon depends on your coming.**
- › We are full of good intentions but weak at keeping promises.
- » **Our only hope of doing God's will
is that you should come and help us do it.**
- › Lord Christ, Word made flesh,
- » **Our world waits for your peace, for your pardon,
and for your grace. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.**

SILENT CONFESSION

WORDS OF COMFORT AND ASSURANCE

- › The Lord, the Light of light, descended and vanquished the powers of hell on the cross. He will come again to clear the gloom of hell away.
- » **Thanks be to God!**

GREETING OF PEACE



Let us know you're here today and how we can pray for you!

OUR OFFERINGS | FROM 1 CHRONICLES 29:14

- › Lord, who are we that we are able to give so generously?
- » **For all things come from you and what we now offer is already yours.**

OFFERTORY | "HOW LONG?"

DOXOLOGY

SCRIPTURE READING | ISAIAH 64:1-12

SERMON | "THOSE WHO WAIT" (COREY WIDMER)

THE NICENE CREED

- › Christians, what do you believe?
- » **We believe in one God,
the Father,
the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**
- » **We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

- » **We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

- › Lift up your hearts!
- » **We lift them up to the Lord.**
- › Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
- » **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**
- › Holy and merciful God, our Father, you have made us in your image and for yourself. You have made this good world for us to tend and to enjoy.
God, our Father,
- » **Hear the praise of grateful hearts.**
- › You sought your ancient people when they strayed from you. You freed them from the oppressor and brought them home. God, our Father,
- » **Hear the praise of grateful hearts.**
- › You have sent your Son to bring us home to you. By his Incarnation–
- » **You have found us.**
- › By his Death–
- » **You have forgiven us.**
- › By his Resurrection–
- » **You have freed us.**
- › God, our Father,
- » **Hear the praise of grateful hearts.**
- › In union with Jesus Christ of Nazareth, our Great High Priest, and with all who worship you, both in heaven and on earth, we offer you our praise, singing:
- » ***Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of pow'r and might,
Heav'n and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is he, blessed is he
Who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.***

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

- › Holy and merciful God, our Father, send down your Holy Spirit on our bread and wine, that they may be for us the body and blood of Christ, and on your people, that we may be the body of Christ, reconciled to you and to each other by his blood. By your Holy Spirit make us—
- » **One with Christ, one with each other, and one in mission to all the world,**
- › Until Christ shall come in final victory and we feast together at his heavenly banquet. We cry,
- » **Maranatha! Even so, come, Lord Jesus, come. Amen!**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION | FROM 1 CORINTHIANS 11:23–26

- › “The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, ‘This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.’ In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.’ For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.”

FOR OUR GUESTS

The Lord’s Supper, or Communion, is one of the two sacraments we celebrate (the other is baptism). It’s one of the most important things we do when we gather together, because the bread and juice are concrete signs of what Jesus has done for us on the cross. When we come forward to receive them, we believe that Jesus is actually present through the Holy Spirit, extending his grace and forgiveness to us. We welcome anyone to the table who is willing to forsake their sin and trust in Jesus Christ for salvation. If you are not able to receive Communion, we invite you to use this time to meditate on one of the following prayers.

PRAYER FOR THOSE SEARCHING FOR TRUTH

Lord Jesus, you claim to be the Way, the Truth and the Life. Help me to be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open me to the reality of who you are. Lead me into the light and life you promise. Amen.

Adapted from prayers written by Rev. Scot Sherman

PRAYER OF BELIEF

Lord Jesus Christ, I admit that I am more blind and sinful than I ever dared admit, but through you I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you for paying my debt on the cross, taking what I deserved in order to offer me complete acceptance. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as Savior and Lord. Amen.

"CAROL OF JOY" (BERRY/FORREST)

Green leaves all fallen, withered and dry;
Brief sunset fading, dim winter sky;
Lengthening shadows, dark closing in:
Then through the stillness, carols begin.

O fallen world, to you is the song!
Death holds you fast, and night tarries long.
Jesus is born your curse to destroy.
Sweet to your ears, a carol of joy!

Pale moon ascending, solemn and slow;
Cold, barren hillside, shrouded in snow;
Deep, empty valley, veiled by the night:
Hear angel music, hopeful and bright.

O fearful world, to you is the song:
Peace with your God, and pardon for wrong.
Tidings for sinners, burdened and bound,
Carol of joy: a Savior is found!

Earth wrapped in sorrow, lift up your eyes!
Thrill to the chorus filling the skies.
Look up, sad-hearted! Witness God's love.
Join in the carol swelling above!

O friendless world, to you is the song!
All heaven's joy to you may belong!
You who are lonely, laden, forlorn,
Now unto you a Savior is born!

PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

» **Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever. Amen.**

"WE WILL FEAST IN THE HOUSE OF ZION"

COMMISSION AND BLESSING | FROM PSALM 62:5

› For you, O Lord, our souls in stillness wait;
» **Truly our hope is in you.**

POSTLUDE

The Ten O'Clock Hour

Join us between our morning services today to grab some coffee or tea downstairs and visit with a friend. Also, consider attending one of the classes listed below:

Advent Hymns (STARTING NEXT WEEK)

Led by Dave Skove and Bill Payne

Do you love Christmas music? Come hear about the biblical foundations and historical connections to some of the most beloved hymns of the Advent and Christmas season—maybe even sing a few!

CLASSROOM A/B

Discover the Bible: Advent

Led by Rick Hutton and Becky Bowers

Explore the biblical stories of preparation and waiting for Jesus' birth during this Advent season. This is an open and casual group discussion-based class. All ages are welcome!

CLASSROOM C/D

Third Kids

Each Sunday we offer childcare during the services for infants through kindergarten; older kids worship with their parents. Then at 10:00 a.m. we have a dedicated Sunday school hour where our kids meet in age-specific classrooms to learn, sing, and read the Bible together.

CHILDCARE

8:45 AND 11:00 A.M.

During our worship services, childcare is available for children *kindergarten and younger*.

Infants, Toddlers, and Little Lambs are in their dedicated classrooms.

Little Lions—Kindergarten are meeting in the Little Lions classroom.

FOLLOWING THE 8:45 SERVICE

If you are planning to attend Sunday school after the service, your child will be escorted to their assigned classroom. Please notify your teacher on the sign-in sheet that your child will be attending Sunday school!

If you are not attending Sunday school, please pick up your children as soon as the service ends.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

10:00 A.M.

All our Sunday school classes take place at 10:00 a.m.

- Infants through fourth grade: check your child in on the first floor.
- Grades 5–6: meet in the Club 56 room on the first floor.
- Grades 7–12: meet in the Student Ministry Lounge (Room E) on the second floor.

FAMILY ROOM

Looking for a private and quiet space to nurse your infant? Check out the Family Room on the first floor. Families with strollers can use the elevator by the Prayer Room, in the back corner of our space.

Prayer Needs

FOR OUR MISSION PARTNERS

Please be praying for Carolyn Rennie in her ministry of care and discipleship in Romania. She works to maintain the outreach activity through English courses and special activities for both children and adults.

FOR OUR CITY

We pray for persons in financial need in metropolitan Richmond: for the unemployed and underemployed, for suitable work, living wages, and fair benefits for all workers in this metropolitan city.

FOR HEALTH

Emily Oostdyk, Mallory Ballard, Tom Ebel, Mary Hale, Kathy White, Ian Woie, Karen Tatti, Juan Ledon, Patrick Wallace, Bill Payne, Elaine Metcalf, Evi Burgin, Elaine Turner, Stephanie Brooks

FOR THOSE GRIEVING LOSS

Brennan Morrissett (mother, 11/9), Mason Robinson (wife, Jean, 11/9); Linda Foster (husband, Al, 10/22); Brad Houff (mother, 9/13); Will and Elisabeth Hayes (son, 9/12); Tom Hayes (mother, 8/18)

BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS

Andrew Berkley Frere	11/13
Lucy Hansen Ballard	10/31
Lilly Jael Sawyer	10/26
Margaret Richmond Mattingly	10/1
Lily Marie Northcutt.	9/23
June Marie Henry	9/9
Elisabeth Louise (Libbie) Bowman	9/7

DEATHS

Gordon Sandridge	11/11
Jean Robinson	11/9
Ann Kooiman	7/30
Mary Ann Hancock.	7/21
Tom Morgan.	5/31
Elisabeth Flanary.	4/14

News & Events

TODAY! LESSONS AND CAROLS

4:30 and 7:30 p.m., Regency

Usher in the Advent season with this special service that tells the full story of God through the reading of Scripture and the singing of both traditional and modern carols. Both services will also be live streamed and recorded.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

Sunday, December 24, at 11:00 a.m., 3:30, 5:00, and 7:00 p.m.

Celebrate with us in our Sanctuary at Regency. Communion will be served at the 7:00 p.m. service. Childcare for 4 and younger available for first three services. Reservation needed for care at 3:30 or 5:00 service: blairb@thirdrva.org.

LECTIO DIVINA: A WEEKLY ADVENT PRACTICE ONLINE

Mondays, December 4, 11 and 18, 12:00–12:30 p.m.

The practice of *Lectio Divina*, or “holy reading,” is a contemplative approach to reading Scripture that emphasizes listening and receiving rather than analyzing and discussing. For the three Mondays of Advent, gather on Zoom with Corey Widmer to practice this ancient act together.



DONATE POINSETTIAS FOR ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

Donate a poinsettia to beautify our Sanctuary during Advent and Christmas, and then enjoy it at home. Poinsettias are \$17.50 each in memory or honor of a loved one. Contact Rebecca by December 6 to order: rebeccah@thirdrva.org. Poinsettias may be claimed at the conclusion of the Christmas Eve services.

NOW HIRING! DIRECTOR OF MISSIONS

We're seeking a leader who will execute the vision for missions at Third by mobilizing the congregation in personal missional engagement and support and engage Mission Partners. Learn more at thirdrva.org/employment.



WOMEN'S CHRISTMAS DINNER

Tuesday, December 5, 6:30–8:30 p.m., Regency

Join us for this beloved gathering with women of Third as we share a meal, worship together, and hear from covenant partner and poet Lauren Medina. RSVP online and bring a dish to share.



Budget Update

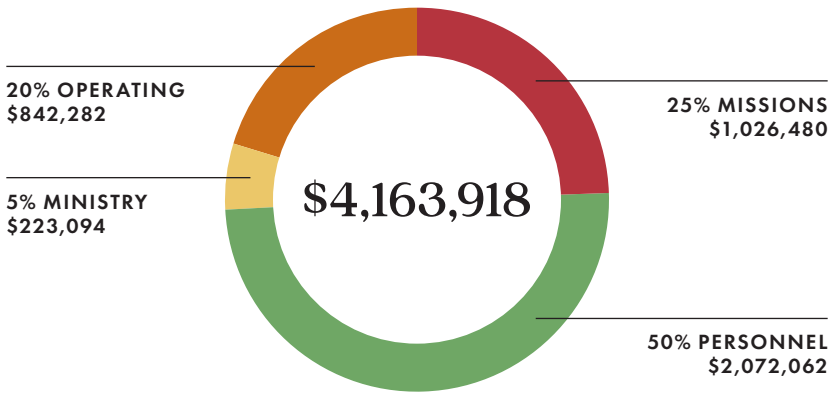
2023 BUDGET NEEDS

In order to finish the year strong and position us well for 2024, we are relying on gifts in December to make up **20% of total projected giving** for the year.



We are in need of and praying for gifts totaling nearly **\$800K before the end of the year** to meet our 2023 budget projection. We invite you to consider including Third in your giving this season. As always, we continue to thank God for his faithful provision and trust that he will continue to meet our every need.

2024 BUDGET OVERVIEW



Today is Faith Commitment Sunday, when we invite our church family to offer their financial faith commitments for the coming year. By making a commitment to the Lord for your giving in the coming year, you are claiming God’s primacy over your life and finances before you know what the year will bring. Pick up a commitment card around the church to drop in the offering plate, mail to the office, or give online at thirdrva.org/faith-commitment.

For more information, contact Geof Stiff, Treasurer and Elder (stiffgs1@gmail.com) or Ed Satterfield, Executive Pastor (eds@thirdrva.org).

Notes



