



# Third Base

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## From the Pastor



The Return of the Prodigal Son, by Rembrandt van Rijn (1669)

The Bible was written for the *ear* and not the *eye*, due to high illiteracy.

One-third of the Old Testament is poetry.

Robert Frost said, “Poetry is when an emotion has found its thought, and the thought has found words.”

Read Psalms 18:1-2—what images do you see?

*I love you, LORD, my strength, The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn (symbol of power) of my salvation, my stronghold.*

Read Luke 15:11-32 and notice Jesus’ visual imagery: home, filth, rags, horizon, feast, father, ring, robe, sandals.

Jesus *draws* you into story of forgiveness, love and restoration.

Rembrandt painted *The Return of the Prodigal Son* toward the end of his life. And final sentences written into Rembrandt’s story were the death of his wife, two of his children, and financial ruin.

Rembrandt’s emotion found its thought and his thoughts were brought to life from brush to canvas.

The visual lessons of Jesus’ parable were Rembrandt’s need for forgiveness, love, and hope.

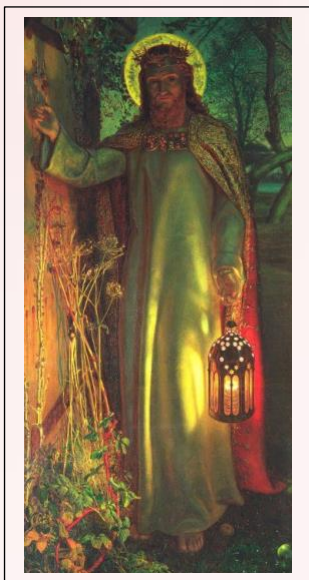
*The Light of the World* is our worship theme through March 2nd.

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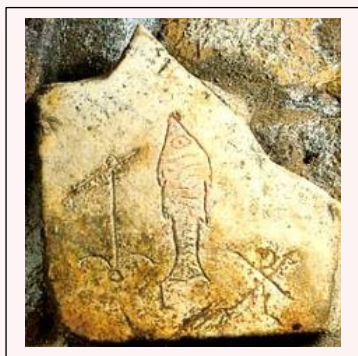
William Holman Hunt's *The Light of the World* is a visual lesson: Jesus holding lantern in his left hand while rest of the world is shrouded in darkness.

*The light of the Morning Star is barely visible above Jesus' head—hope has arrived with the dawn of another day.*

Hunt was obsessed with capturing reality of dawn light—painting in various locations— capturing authentic visual of dawn. Notice light draws your eye to door—an invitation to salvation—and knob is where you exist—on other side of the door. He is knocking—the Savior is waiting to enter your heart. Will you let Him in?



The early followers of Jesus Christ carved Fish, Anchor, and Chi-Ro as a confession of faith in catacombs. The fish is an acrostic from the Greek word: *Ichthus*—translating to *Jesus Christ God's Son Savior*.



You are invited to create visual confession of faith—representing Third's 175th Anniversary. The artistic invitation is for all ages and not designed for people with artistic gifts. The simplicity of early Christian images in catacombs carry as much weight and significance as any masterpiece.

Here are your next steps:  
Pick up a 4-inch ceramic and marker in Pillsbury Threshold during month of February.

One side of ceramic, draw a visual representation of your spiritual journey—what *emotion* has found its thought—now *translate* into creating design.

Return ceramic to main office by end of March.

Sydney Bailey will construct an ancient confession, born from persecution, in form of Fish—outlined by all Third's ceramic designs.

Therefore, consider your spiritual journey. Meditate and bring *thought* to *life*.

And *transfer this thought* - by picking up tools of marker and ceramic- and let us celebrate a Grand Design - dedicated to God - as Third travels its 175th year.

Blessings all,  
Tommy



Kicking off celebrations for Third's 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary cake celebration ~ January 19<sup>th</sup>





# Family Ministries

Drew Phillips, Minister to Families

*Families who fellowship, serve, play, and pray. This is our goal for 2025.*

Spring Bible School for Toddlers through 5<sup>th</sup> grade: Sunday, March 9<sup>th</sup>, from 1:00-4:00 p.m.

After worship, join Family Ministry for lunch and then leave your children for a sampling of VBS, music, crafts, games, and Godly Play stories from the Old Testament.



Third continues to be blessed with children and babies! If you are interested in helping with extended care during worship, please contact Ella Banks.



We continue to have meaningful Sunday School and Wednesday Night Youth Group times!

Youth had a fun MLK day at the City Museum and a meal at the Foundry.

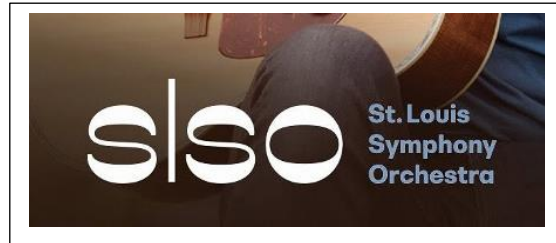


Students reading Dr. King's prayers during January worship





Upcoming Family event!  
**Adam Wainwright with the St.  
Louis Symphony Orchestra at  
Stiefel Theatre on  
February 22, 7:30 p.m.**



We're calling it a "fireside chat." Our time will consist of a devotional thought and a guided prayer time. You will be able to interact with us through [this link](#).

Like the whole Wayfarer endeavor, we're not exactly sure how this will work. But we do know we'll have a chance to see and respond to each other. And that's good.

Hope to see you,  
Steve and Dawn

Every Sunday morning, we haul our laptop into the living room, set it up on the dining room table, and spread out our papers, note, and Bible to prepare for and meet with Wayfarers. This has been our habit since last April. A group that averages seven has gathered faithfully.

On Sunday, February 16, at 6:00 p.m. (CST), however, we will be doing something different--zooming with the larger Third Baptist family.





## Missions Focus: Health Care in South Africa – February 2025

Please take time to read and absorb the amazing work our ABC missionary, Kit Ripley, is doing in Thailand. The following is her blog found on the ABCIM website posted January 12, 2025.

In 2010, President Obama designated January as “National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month”, and subsequent presidents have renewed this proclamation. The goal is to raise awareness about trafficking in persons and empower the public to take action to prevent and respond to human trafficking. This year’s theme focuses on the importance of a holistic approach to prevention, recognizing the critical intersection of trafficking with sexual abuse, interpersonal violence and online crime.



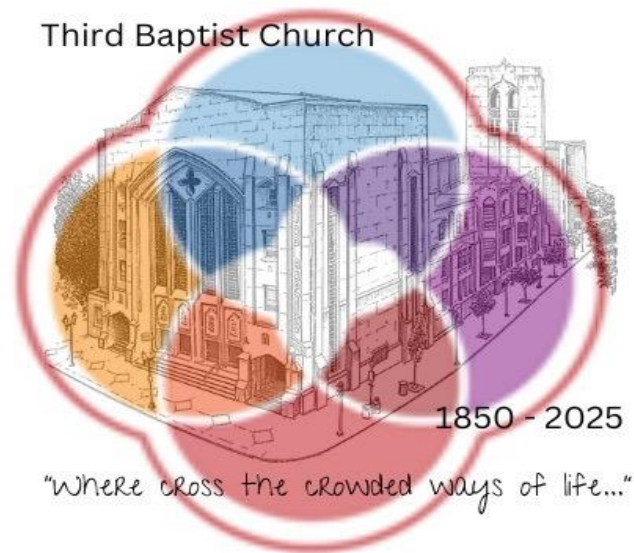
Human trafficking includes forced labor, slavery, and commercial sexual exploitation. In Thailand, people are frequently exploited in agriculture, construction, domestic labor, factories, the fishing industry, and commercial sex establishments. Internet-facilitated child trafficking is also on the rise. Another form of trafficking that has been increasing in Southeast Asia in recent years is trafficking for forced labor at illegal call centers in which people are unwillingly forced to commit cyber-crimes via phone, social media, and fraudulent online sales, investment, and banking schemes. Victims who do not meet their assigned quotas are beaten, threatened at gunpoint, sexually assaulted or subjected to the withholding of food or water. A [Thai newspaper recently reported](#) that, “Between October 1, 2024, and January 9, 2025, Thai authorities conducted 255 operations, apprehending 695 individuals in call center schemes”.

Founded in 1987, the New Life Center (NLC) is a pioneer in the field of anti-trafficking, working tirelessly to empower marginalized people and disrupt cycles of human trafficking. Our strategy focuses on prevention and aftercare. Prevention is key to stemming the flow of exploitation. Over the last five years, the NLC has conducted over 50 awareness-raising campaigns focusing on trafficking prevention, safe migration, internet safety, civil law, gender equality, and prevention of interpersonal violence. We also participated in over 200 networking activities, forming strategic alliances with various state and private sector agencies to advance justice and human rights, combat human trafficking and violence against women and children, assist with victim identification, and address issues of statelessness. Through the NLC Foundation’s Sievert Larsson Scholarship program, over 600 students received scholarships to pursue higher education in fields such as psychology, education, hotel and tourism, English, and business administration, exponentially multiplying vocational options for graduates. Additionally, the NLCF supports family and community resilience through life and vocational skills development, social work support, and mental health services and mental health training workshops throughout our community.

The NLCF also provides trauma-informed aftercare services. Over the last five years, 55 survivors of sexual abuse, human trafficking, domestic violence, and other forms of trauma received comprehensive wrap-around care in our residential program. Additionally, over 75 survivors of human trafficking received short-term shelter at the NLCF while Thai police and social workers conducted case investigations and family tracing. 35 victims of child smuggling and neglect were also given short-term shelter and trauma-informed care at the NLCF before being reunited with family members. Through these anti-trafficking activities, the NLCF contributes to the cultivation of healthy communities that are resilient, and safe from trafficking, abuse, and other forms of exploitation.

Peggy Pittenger, World Missions Chair

Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples. 1 Chronicles 16:24 NRSV



## 2025 Anniversary Celebration Calendar

### **Sunday, February 23, 2025: 1850-1900**

ALL CHURCH BREAKFAST 9:45 AM Johnson Fellowship Hall, free to all

Free: come and fellowship, all are welcome

WORSHIP 11 A.M. Guest Speaker: Rev. R. Leslie Limbaugh, Pastor of Selma American Baptist Church- Festus, Missouri. TBC Associate Pastor/Minister of Students and Communications, 2004-2013

### **Sunday, May 4, 2025: 1900-1950**

WORSHIP 11 A.M. Guest Speaker: Rev Adam Banks, Pastor of First Baptist Church, Springfield, Ohio - and son of Ira and Ella Banks, members of TBC since 1991

CHURCH OUTING: Cardinals-Mets Baseball Game, 1:15 p.m.

### **Sunday, August 17, 2025**

WORSHIP 11 A.M. Special guest, Mark Gifford, former church organist

CONCERT 1 P.M.

### **Sunday, September 7, 2025: 1950-2000**

WORSHIP 11 A.M. Guest speaker: Dr. John F. Anderson, Senior Pastor from 1990-2000

All church picnic in Johnson Fellowship Hall. All are welcome.

### **Saturday, December 6, 2025**

Special 175th Anniversary Celebration Gala Luncheon, details to come

### **Sunday, December 7, 2025: 2000-2025**

WORSHIP 11 A.M. Guest speaker: Dr. Warren J. Hoffman, TBC Senior Pastor from 2005-2013

# Adult Discipleship

## Wednesdays in February

5:15 p.m. Dinner

5:45 p.m. Discussion and Spiritual application of Michael Card's *John: The Gospel of Wisdom*

sign up for dinner reservations at [tsimons@third-baptist.org](mailto:tsimons@third-baptist.org)



## FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

### *Happy Birthday to...*

- 06 🎁 Delilah Canning & Maria Gray
- 09 🎁 Melinda Jackson
- 10 🎁 LaVerne Graham
- 11 🎁 Beverly Odell
- 12 🎁 Kaelyn Smithers
- 13 🎁 Linda Ramey
- 19 🎁 Alex Brooks
- 20 🎁 Gene Dobbs Brandford
- 21 🎁 Rick Lay & Mike Niederer
- 22 🎁 Edward Sharpe



### Grand and Washington Podcast

<https://feeds.buzzsprout.com/1750498.rss>



# Third Baptist Church

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**Third-baptist.org**

We'd love to connect with you!



[third-baptist.org/guest](http://third-baptist.org/guest)

## Third Baptist Church Staff

**Dr. Philip Barnes**  
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

**Lansin Lim Kimler**  
PIANIST

**Brent Johnson**  
ORGANIST

**Dr. Tommy Simons**  
PASTOR

**Rev. Drew Phillips**  
MINISTER TO FAMILIES

**Sally Stevenson**  
PARISH NURSE

**Ella Banks**  
RECEPTIONIST/OFFICE ASST.

**Tom Kurtz**  
BUSINESS MANAGER

**Christine McCarthy**  
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**Ronnie Winthrop**  
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