



Third Base

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From the Pastor's Desk



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Third,

I am driven by gratitude and joy.
I am beyond grateful and more than a little surprised by God that I get to continue to serve with you in a new capacity.

I once heard a pastor say the difference between a false god and the real God is the capacity for surprise...consider my faith stronger through the process of becoming your next pastor.

I love this city. It drives me nuts and yet the people in it, the good work and goodwill that shows up in the desire to heal and help I believe and trust must be bigger than the apathy and forces that work against the common good.

I love the neighborhood where our church is. It is thriving and changing and challenging. We are blessed with such unique neighbors and gifted with such wonderful opportunity to bear witness to the loving goodness of God and the intersection of our city.

I love the community that is Third Baptist Church. This community welcomed Dani and me as mildly familiar transplants seven years ago and soon after welcomed Julius. Julius' life is richer and fuller because he is being raised with and by you, church.

I have long heard of your witness and generosity, commitment to the forgotten and unheard, your excellence in program and worship.

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I am humbled to be small part and to share in the cheerleading, the challenging, and the participating as we honor God who brings us together.

I ask a couple of things from you:

- Grace and Patience
- Willingness to try new things
- Consideration of requests
- Continue to lead with the hospitality and welcome that are your hallmarks

The Executive Committee has graciously asked Rob Lamb to preach the first three stewardship Sundays in October. Rob is a gifted teacher. He is devout, kind, thoughtful and encouraging. We are fortunate that he will be sharing with us! I'm thankful to the Executive Committee for the gift of time as I transition from family minister to pastor and navigate finding a family minister. Rob, I am grateful to you for your leadership and faithful commitment God and our church. I am excited to lead the first few Wednesday nights in October. I look forward to sharing with you about prayer, stories that shape us, and the church as jazz ensemble

And one final note of gratitude:

Tommy, Caren, Carson, and Colton Simons were the first people to welcome me to Third.

I got to know Carson and Colton as youth (who are now my friends as adults!) and experience Tommy and Caren's leadership and partnership. There are things that only a pastor's family can know and experience. Tommy and Caren modeled loving kindness and generous service.

Third, you have been blessed with remarkably stable leadership for over a decade; a decade that was particularly challenging and tumultuous for churches.

I will remain forever grateful for the countless kindnesses Tommy and Caren shared with our church. We honor them and God who called them to Third with our continued prayers and affirmation.

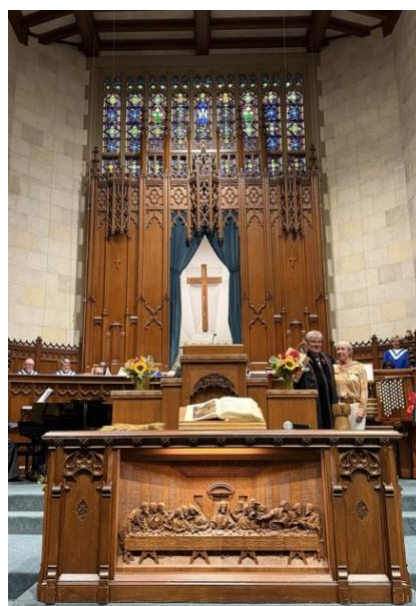
Third, as we start a new season together, I will share a prayer that I offered on my call Sunday. I keep this printed on my desk as a reminder and picture you all with me as I pray:

The Blessing of Grace

by The Rev. William Sloane Coffin
(paraphrased by Drew)

*I pray God give (us) the grace never to sell
(ourselves) short;
Grace to risk something big for something
good; and
Grace to remember the world is now
too dangerous for anything but the truth
and
too small for anything but love.*

Gratefully,
Drew



Tommy and Caren's last Sunday at Third was a full and beautiful farewell. Stay tuned for the November newsletter and a photo montage of the day's events.

Family Ministries

Drew Phillips, Minister to Families

Third,

Our students bless our church. They are not the church of the future—they are the church now and they lead and serve with excellence.

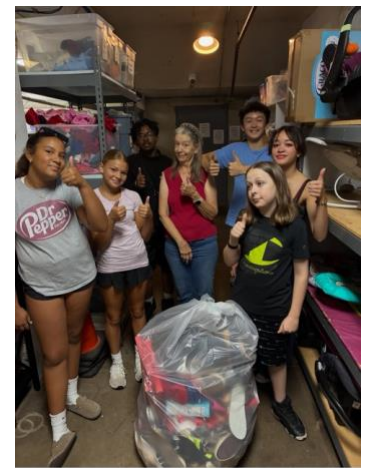
Take a few moments and look at these photos, remember and pray for these names: Alex, Avery, Isaac, Autumn, Gabe, Gregory, Jaden, Elijah, Mia, Kaelyn, Gabby, Kaiya, Pretty, Bright, Clayton, Louis....there are many more than pictured or named (forgive me!).

They lead in worship and service, (see below the picture with Peggy Pittenger, missions chair who organized a workday) at Gateway 180! In the coming weeks and months, our students will need your prayers and encouragement, your time and gifts. If you feel the Spirit speaking to you leading you to work with our students call me! If you wish you had more time in the nursery with our youngest—call me!

Thank you Portia Nartey, Natalie Thiems, Lakisha Johnson, Eveyln Kurtz, Clara Jackson and so many others who make sure our students are loved.

Pray for us as we pray for you!

Drew



Third Baptist Church & Des Peres Baptist Church Endowment Fund

Grant opportunity for service in the city

Does your organization serve in Saint Louis City
and have a funding need for an initiative?

- Simple Application Process - due **October 30, 2026**
- Opportunity to tell your organization's mission/story
- Explain your specific need and hopes for the grant
- Grants that meet criteria will be awarded based on available funds during the cycle
- Applications will be reviewed by the Urban Ministries Board to assess financial need and alignment with the mission of Third Baptist Church and Des Peres Baptist Church Endowment Fund

Find out more here:

<https://third-baptist.org/missions/community/des-peres-fund>

To request an application: e-mail Dani at
phillipsedanielle@gmail.com

Missions Focus: October 2026

Missions has been busy behind the scenes with several activities. In August, the Wednesday evening Bible Study group learned more about Tim and Kathy Rice in Vanga, Democratic Republic of the Congo. American Baptists established a hospital in Vanga in the early 1900's. In 1961, Dr. Dan Fountain arrived and the ministry continued for many years under his capable leadership. Tim and Kathy have been there 11 years, and remarkable growth continues as doctors, nurses, and ancillary staff are trained. Their newsletters are full of exciting adventures and highlights. You are encouraged to sign up for their newsletter [here](#).



On September 9th, we hosted Melanie Baggao. When the Chetti's retired, we moved our support to Melanie to keep an active role in the ministry in the Middle East. Just like Dan Chetti, Melanie teaches at the Arab Baptist Theological Seminary. Additionally, she serves as the Director of INSAAF, a ministry to migrant domestic workers. Melanie described their plight as they are lured to Lebanon from many other countries with the promise of good work and good pay, only to have their papers stolen and often left on the streets defenseless. INSAFF works diligently to provide services to these women, giving them hope. And sharing the love of Christ. The need is overwhelming. To sign up for Melanie's newsletters please visit [this site](#).

The leaves have not begun to fall, yet we are talking about Christmas. This is the time our friends at The Christian Activity Center (CAC) in East St. Louis begin their campaign to provide a Merry Christmas for the youngsters that regularly attend programs at CAC. Not only do they provide for the students attending CAC but for siblings in the home. Third Baptist has long supported this effort. Initially it was the Women's Missionary Society who shopped and wrapped and delivered the gifts. In 2024, when that group was not long able to carry on, the opportunity was opened to the congregation. And boy did you respond. 21 children in 2024 and 23 children in 2025 had a brighter Christmas thanks to your generosity.

If you would like to participate this year by shopping for a child (or children) please let Peggy Pittenger know. You will receive a wish list and guidance from experienced shoppers. For others that would like to participate (but not shop), you may donate to the World Mission Fund during the month of October. All donations during October (unless otherwise designated) will allow the Mission Team to shop, wrap and deliver gifts. CAC suggests planning on \$175.00/child. Any amount donated to The World Mission Fund will add up to a Merry Christmas!

Peggy Pittenger
Phone: 314.323.1211
or peggypittenger@gmail.com

Musical Notes

Some of you may know about the Saint Louis Chamber Chorus, which is conducted by our music director, Philip Barnes. This unique organization presents six programs of great musical beauty around our metropolitan area, and subscribing to it gives you a reason to explore some of the interesting and historic venues that are to be found in our midst. Performances are always held on Sunday afternoons, from October through May.

This year the season subscription represents a major savings over individual ticket purchases, and signing up for the series makes you plan ahead and reserve those occasions before other things get in the way! Some of you will www.chamberchorus.org

Coming Sunday, October 4th!

On Sunday, October 4, at 3pm, our fellow Baptists at Second Baptist Church of Richmond Heights will host the opening concert by the Saint Louis Chamber Chorus, which includes several Third musicians and is led by our own Philip Barnes. The program is based on literal and metaphorical images of 'fire', and a special attraction will be a new set of songs arranged from the poetry of Sara Teasdale by the Latvian maestro, Eriks Esenvalds. Eriks studied at the Riga Baptist Theological College, and has by now earned an international reputation for his accessible and moving harmonies. Tickets may be purchased at the door, or in advance at www.chamberchorus.org



ALWAYS OLD, ALWAYS NEW

A point of personal privilege, as they say.

It was an unusual blessing to be present at Third Baptist on Sunday, September 20, to hear our son Drew preach in the view of the call as senior pastor. We rejoice with him and with the congregation at this momentous transition. You will understand if we express both pride and gratitude.

At the same time we give great thanks for the ministry Tommy has afforded Third Baptist and the city of St. Louis for these past eleven years. By the grace of God, he has laid a terrific foundation for what new things the Lord may choose to unveil and make possible. Blessings on this brother and on Caren in their retirement.

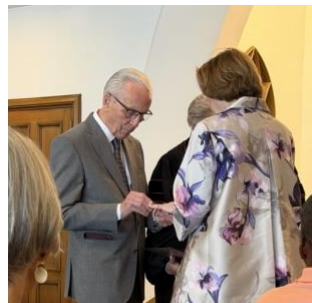
All of which is to say transitions meet us, whether we are prepared for them or not.

Today we think about what any of this means for Wayfarers. We've been at this two and a half years. Ours is not a large group, but we are extremely grateful for the community we encounter on Sunday mornings and the ministry that happens along the way. Praying for each other is no small component.

Does the future mean more of the same? A new direction? Different studies? The inclusion of others? Feel free to help us chart the way. What God has in mind is what we are concerned for, and you may just help us find that direction.

Steve and Dawn Phillips

We congratulate newlyweds,
Jerry and Charlotte Bryan!



Choir Changes

Members of TBC who would like to experience singing in the choir are invited to contact Philip Barnes, the Director of Music, for more information. Membership is voluntary, and we can work around most people's schedules. However, potential members must have at least rudimentary music-reading skills.

The choir is supported by several 'section leaders,' and in early September we bade farewell to one of them, Kathryn Omune, for her service to TBC's music program as she has moved with her family to a new home in Fort Campbell (KY). Kathryn leaves with our thanks and best wishes.

We now welcome soprano Laura Hollingsworth, who is succeeding Heather Fehl, having served as an occasional substitute in the past. Laura sings with the Saint Louis Chamber Chorus and teaches school in Waterloo (IL). We hope to bring Heather back from time to time, but for now she is following her passion for musical theater.

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

Happy Birthday to...

- 01 🎁 Bonnie McDaniel
- 02 🎁 Tammy Lamb &
Steve Phillips
- 03 🎁 Vanessa Gibson &
Luther Jackson &
Isabel Morena
- 09 🎁 Mona Harrison
- 12 🎁 Eliot Barnes
- 17 🎁 Jerry Bryan
- 22 🎁 Judy Parham
- 25 🎁 Mary Lynom &
Julius Phillips
- 27 🎁 Ruby Whiteside



Listen in to Third's Podcasts:

at [The Lively Table](#):

- *Justice and Mercy* - with Jerry Bryan,
weekly on Sundays
- *At the Movies*
with Ashleigh and Aaron
and
The Seeker, [here](#).



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We'd love to connect with you!



third-baptist.org/guest

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