



# Third Base

Vol 90, Issue 3 • March 2026



*Hendrick Hondius' 1642 Engraving of Plague*

## From the Pastor

Mrs. Troffea twirled and danced into the night until fainting from exhaustion and falling into deep sleep. She woke up. And resumed dancing, and despite pleas from her husband, refused to stop. The third day of dancing bloodied and bruised her feet—she began to draw a crowd—oblivious to their presence—she danced on.

A few days passed: 30 adults were dancing in the streets of this town in the same manner—witnesses describe their movements as “leaping, sweating and contorting their bodies in unnatural positions.”

One week later—30 dancers grew to 100— one month—400 danced in the streets with little rest or pause— resulting in heart attacks, strokes and death.

The sickness was called *The Dancing Plague* (1642 etching above) of Strasbourg—the year was 1518. There are other accounts of “dancing plague”— 1017 and 1188 in German and Welsh towns, the largest outbreak along the Rhine River in 1374, and several other incidents recorded in western European countries during this time span.

The summer of 1951 several people ate bread from the same bakery. After a few hours all experienced intense sweating, insomnia, trembling, “giddiness,” and burning sensations. The most severe cases resulted in babbling, constant movement and hallucinations—4 died because their heart gave out under all the stress.

The best guess: dancing plague was caused by ergot poisoning.

*continued on next page*

Ergot is a fungus growing on grains—the same chemical found in LSD.



The Isenheim Altarpiece functioned as a comfort to patients—suffering from bubonic plague and dancing plague.

The decay of the body and disfiguring of disease is suffered by Christ: sores, twisted arms and legs while gangrene settles over the body. The sick, dying, and forsaken suffer from isolation.



The long breath, pause, shaking of head as you exit long term care facilities with a whispered prayer, “please God, do not let me exit like this.” And as time moves on, way too quickly as you age, you will face inevitable decay of your body, whether by plague or “natural causes.”

Dr. Lydia Dugdale is Professor of Medicine and Director of the Center for Clinical Medical Ethics at Columbia University, and her Christian faith reflects practical applications from her book, *The Lost Art of Dying*.

Dr. Dugdale concludes with:

*The image of a young boy with his grandmother exemplifies the answer that most people give when asked what brings meaning to their lives...the representation of family suggests that the threat of our finitude should drive us toward those we love. But it also highlights how life continues despite death's shadow. To die well requires that we live well, and we live best in the company of communities that help us make sense of our finitude and find beauty in decay.*

The Apostle Paul places inevitable death in perspective:

So, we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.

(2 Corinthians 4:16-18)

Grace and Peace,  
Tommy



*March 29: Palm Sunday, 11 AM Worship & Concert with Isobel Ramsey, 6 PM in the Memorial Chapel with fellowship afterwards in Children's Department*

*April 1: Passover Meal, 6 PM*

*April 3: Good Friday Service, 7 PM*

*April 5: Easter Sunday, 11 AM Worship*

# Family Ministries

Drew Phillips, Minister to Families

March Third Base from Families:

Our youth were part of a moving Ash Wednesday service I always feel a little strange saying how much I enjoy this service, which reminds us that we are dust and will return to dust. And yet it is the most appropriate way to begin our Lenten Journey to Easter: death in Adam to life in Christ.



Our next several Wednesday night youth groups and Sunday School lessons will focus on journeying to Jerusalem with Jesus. I am looking forward to our usually compelling time wondering and wandering through these stories that shape us.

A reminder for Junior and Senior High Students: SUMMER CAMP SIGN-UPS ARE LIVE!

- JUNIOR HIGH: July 5-11 : <https://pci.jotform.com/form/260255379463160>
- SENIOR HIGH: July 12-18 : <https://pci.jotform.com/form/260045037589157>

LUNCH AT THE FOUNDRY:

Youth! Our last attempt to go to the Foundry got snowed out! Do-over - March 1st after worship, lunch and time at the Sandbox VR! RSVP with Drew.

EASTER WEEKEND:

Friday, APRIL 3rd: come to the Good Friday Service and stay for Youth Lock-in!

EASTER SUNDAY: April 5th: Easter Egg Hunt for children in the Children's department!

Sunday morning Extended Session  
Volunteers Needed!

Please contact Drew Philips or  
Ella Banks



## What Is the Organ Media Foundation? From Brent Johnson

More than twenty years ago, I convinced a few generous people to donate money to start an internet radio station. It was called Organlive, and it played classical organ music 24 hours a day all from a computer that sat in the corner of my apartment. Slowly, the online audience grew, donations trickled in, and CDs arrived in the mail. After about eight years, growth accelerated dramatically, making it clear that this work needed a more formal structure. In 2011, the Organ Media Foundation was established as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a simple mission: to fund and promote the music of the classical organ in new and traditional media.

Originally, the Foundation was intended primarily as a fundraising arm to sustain Organlive and to assist other worthwhile projects that shared a passion for the pipe organ. Few such projects emerged at first, so our board and volunteers began creating them ourselves. Over time, the Foundation evolved from a fundraising organization into a production company.

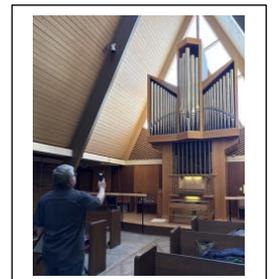
We launched two additional online radio stations. We began producing live concert broadcasts (including the re-dedication of Third Baptist's pipe organ in 2013). We created the podcast *At the Organ* and developed *The King of Instruments* radio show (heard on Classic 107.3 on Sundays at 7 a.m.) Occasionally, we added video to our work, recording performances and special events. Then one of our board members encouraged us to expand further into video. At the same time, I was experimenting with short social media videos to promote Third's Friday Pipes concert series. With nothing more than my phone, I filmed a brief tour inside Third's organ chambers while explaining how a component of the instrument was being repaired. The response was surprising. It turns out that watching an organ technician at work and seeing the hidden world inside a pipe organ is fascinating to many people.

In 2018, I began producing regular YouTube videos featuring instruments around St. Louis. When funding allowed, I hired an assistant and traveled to document other organs. In 2019, while researching a radio project in Minneapolis, I filmed an episode at Mount Olive Lutheran Church, home to a celebrated instrument associated with composer Paul Manz and organist David Cherwien. That video dramatically expanded our audience overnight. Mount Olive was only the twentieth organ featured on the channel. As of today, we have documented more than 220 pipe organs across the country.

Our travels have taken us to extraordinary places including Moselem Springs Lutheran Church in Pennsylvania, home to the oldest extant American-built pipe organ (1770), and Atlantic City's Boardwalk Hall, home to the largest musical instrument in the world. Our most-viewed video, however, was recorded right across the street on the 1928 Wurlitzer organ of the St. Louis Fox Theatre.

All of this has happened while continuing to maintain our radio stations, oversee archival projects (including the many boxes of CDs and LPs still waiting to be processed in my house), and raise the necessary funds to sustain the work. For that reason, my decision to step down as Third Baptist's principal organist, though it may have seemed sudden, has been a long and thoughtful one, and one made with the support of all my colleagues. I enjoy being part of the team of musicians here, but this congregation deserves musicians who can devote the full measure of time and energy required for the role. As the work of the Organ Media Foundation has grown, it has become increasingly difficult for me to do both well.

This year the American Guild of Organists' national convention will be held in St. Louis, and the Organ Media Foundation will be participating. If you would like to follow our work, listen to one of our stations, explore the pipe organ more deeply, or even see what the inside of Third's organ looks like, you can begin at <https://organ.media>. If you would like to support this mission financially, the Organ Media Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, and donation information is available on our website.



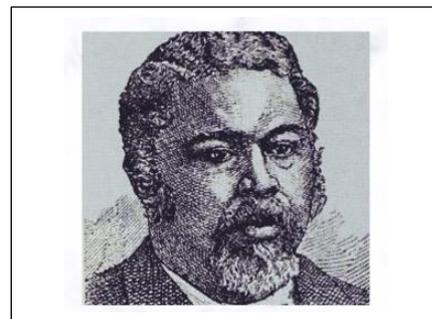
## ***Adoration - The Anniversary Concert***

Friday, March 20, at 1:00 p.m.

Mark your calendars for an upcoming concert event. Dr. William Sullivan and special guests invite you to an organ recital titled "Adoration - The Anniversary Concert." Dr. Sullivan is celebrating his wedding anniversary with music special to that event. It will include works and transcriptions by Felix Borowski, Eugène Gigout, Richard Wagner, Théodore Dubois, John Rutter, Edvard Grieg, Dom Paul Benoît, César Franck, and a writer of old melodies affectionately known as "anon." ***The event is free and open to the public. Hope to see you there!***

## Mission Focus: March 2026

The first known missionaries to emerge from the newly formed United States were George and Hannah Liele, emancipated slaves. Although born into slavery in Virginia in 1750, George's owner, Henry Sharp, a Christian, allowed him to attend church services as a young man where he was converted in 1773. Recognizing his passion for Christ, Sharp, encouraged him to preach to the slaves on the plantation. He was ordained by the same church on May 20, 1775.



Among Liele's early converts were Andrew Bryan, who founded the First African Baptist Church in Savannah and David George, who started Silver Bluff Baptist Church in Aiken, South Carolina, before planting churches in Nova Scotia and Sierra Leone.

Liele was freed by Henry Sharp, when he became a Christian, however, after Sharp died during the war, his son tried to re-enslave Liele. To escape, Liele became an indentured worker to a British officer and emigrated to Jamaica along with his wife and four children. After paying off his debt and regaining his freedom, he supported his family by farming and transporting goods.

Always the preacher, Liele continued to spread the gospel by hosting a home church until he was able to construct a church building in Kingston, Jamaica. Believing in inclusion, Liele invited everyone, whether black or white, free or enslaved. He was also committed to the education of free and enslaved children.

Because of his support of the British during the war, Liele had made several friendly contacts among British Baptists in England, who helped him secure funding to plant churches and schools for the children of freed and enslaved parents, drawing the ire of the Jamaican Assembly, made of up plantation owners who feared he would incite enslaved people into rebellion. Liele, however, continued to travel throughout the island, eventually building a second Baptist church in Spanish Town, Jamaica.

Despite enduring persecution and imprisonment, Liele's faithfulness left a legacy of disciples, churches, schools, and 8,000 Baptists in Jamaica by 1814. Estimates today are that 180,000 – 190,000 active Baptists in Jamaica today trace their roots to George Liele.

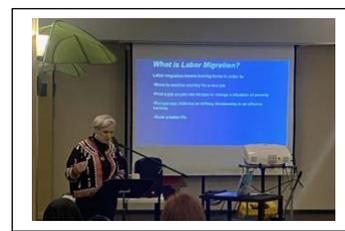
Sources:

<https://internationalministries.org/history/>

<https://internationalministries.org/george-liele/>: Author Darshana Chetti is the daughter of Dr. Samuel Chetti, CEO/Executive Minister Emeritus of ABCOFLASH, and the niece of IM global servants to Lebanon, Dan and Sarah Chetti. This is the first in a four-part series celebrating Black missionaries from IM's past and present as part of Black History Month 2022.

Missions Updates continue on next page

Kit ripely visited Third in February. She has served through American Baptist churches, international ministries, in Thailand for over twenty years. She is engaged in heroic work doing trauma informed art therapy and advocacy for those who have been trafficked. We are grateful to be able to support Kit and her good work and are thankful she could share with us while stateside.



## Annual Carol Fleming Pillsbury Tea

Saturday April 11th at 11:00 A.M.

*Tickets on sale from the church office*



### A DIFFERENT KIND OF COMMUNITY

We've been in church all our lives. Every Sunday. Every Wednesday. Plenty of other days.

Always in the presence of other church people. Shaking hands. Hugging. Looking people in the eye.

That's the way community seemed to be ordered. In fact, we probably couldn't conceive of another way to do community. Community meant actual gatherings of people. Therefore, if you had told us there might be another way to develop and experience community, we would, no doubt, have been skeptical. And yet that other way is what has happened.

Through almost two years of Sunday morning zoom experiences, Wayfarers has been community. The sharing of lives. Rejoicing. Sorrowing. Hoping together. Weeping. Only at a distance. We have been amazed at the number of times we have told friends, neighbors, and even strangers about this Sunday morning community. We say that to affirm our fellow Wayfarers, but also to offer an invitation to others to participate. The door is open.

And should you join us, we think you'd find that our community even reaches beyond Sunday mornings.

Steve & Dawn

# Adult Discipleship

## Dinner and Discipleship Wednesdays in March

**5:15 p.m.** Dinner

**5:45 p.m.** Discipleship discussion:  
The Gospel of John with Rob Lamb

*Sign up for dinner reservations  
with Pastor Tommy:*

[tsimons@third-baptist.org](mailto:tsimons@third-baptist.org)



## MARCH BIRTHDAYS

### Happy Birthday to...

- 01 🎁 Michelle Robinson
- 03 🎁 Juanita Wallis
- 04 🎁 Maria Bradford  
& Dennis Reinard
- 08 🎁 Virgil Dickinson
- 09 🎁 Nancy Furgerson
- 10 🎁 Brent Johnson
- 11 🎁 Tom Kurtz  
& Steven Spencer
- 16 🎁 Marquis Johnson
- 17 🎁 Naomi Thiems
- 20 🎁 Lynn Spencer
- 22 🎁 Richard Stevenson
- 25 🎁 Tena Thompson
- 29 🎁 Don Wainwright



Listen in to Third's Podcasts:

<https://www.buzzsprout.com/1750498>

You are invited to journey three paths:

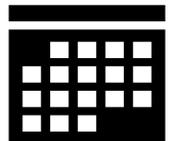
- *Justice and Mercy - with Jerry Bryan – weekly on Sundays*
- *Walking Through Lent - Pastor*
- *At the Movies – with Ashleigh and Aaron*

## Mark your Calendar

Quarterly Business  
Meeting:

Sunday, March 8th

Following morning worship





# Third Baptist Church

**620 North Grand Blvd**

**St. Louis, MO 63103**

**Office: 314-533-7340**

**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

**Isobel Moreno**  
FINANCE MANAGER

**Ronnie Winthrop**  
FACILITIES MANAGER