



FROM THE PASTOR

It's Friday afternoon, November 19 and I'm staring out my office window—leaves are changing in Strauss Park—the Fox Theatre will come alive in a few hours. And last on my list is “December Third Base article to Deanna.”

I'm not much in the Christmas spirit this afternoon but I am most grateful, experiencing my seventh advent season with our beloved community at Third.

I seem to mutter “where does the time go” much too often. I cannot believe a baby held in the palm of my hand is now 14—and the eldest has left home for college, turning 20 this month. Caren asked last night, “how long have we been married?” I had to pause a beat or two, or three...

God has written people into your story for a season—all our earthly relationships will come to an end.

And though this is a bit of a downer Christmas reminder, I believe it leads to wisdom. I wish for all of you a most precious gift—**perspective**.

Scripture reminds us that our time together is a short season. Therefore:

- Spend your most precious commodity—time—with those you love during the Season.

- *Fully knowing I am sounding like the old man on the porch* – insist on spending time at your dinner table, reduce meals in front of the TV, while banning all electronic devices. Go “old school!”
- Engage and participate in Third’s Advent Season.
- Gift children in Lebanon or Saint Louis through Third’s Christmas Offering.
- Focus on one individual or family who traveled some hard roads in 2021 – offer grace gifts of food, time or written note.
- Take a breath and review your spiritual formation. What areas of life need improvement concerning your relationship with God and one another?
- Refuse to be consumed by your political preference—left, right, or none of the above. Simon and Garfunkel’s *Mrs. Robinson* (Ecclesiastes favorite song) offers a bit of perspective: “*laugh about it, shout about it, when you got to choose – any way you look at it you lose.*”

And the grandest perspective of all!
God’s love was revealed to us in this way:

God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another.

(1 John 4:8-11)

Beloved, Merry Christmas!

Grace and Peace,
Tommy



Painted in the end of the 18th century as part of the iconostasis of the Greek Catholic Cathedral of Hajdúdorog, Hungary, this icon is placed on the first tier of the iconostasis, the so called *Great Feasts* tier.

*Photo by Jojojoe - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0
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Family Ministries

This December I invite our families to read and talk about these verses from Luke (see box below). They are the Gospel readings for each week of Advent and Christmas Day this year.

As you read, bring your expectations, what we think we'll hear about Jesus, what we hope to hear about Jesus, what we would like to hear about Jesus and measure it with what Luke's Gospel gives us.

Advent to me is like when we are young and know we are getting a bike for Christmas. It's wrapped or hidden in the garage. We see it, we know what it is, we asked for it, we have hoped for it. We know it is coming, can we please just have it now?

But we have to wait.

We wait with expectation and joy and more than a little impatience.

We know Jesus is coming. We know what he promises, what he will offer us, the Good News with which he interrupts our world. And yet we have to wait.

Maybe instead of "having" to wait we think of it as "getting" to wait. We prepare ourselves. We join Jesus's mother, Mary, in pondering and reflecting and holding in our heart.

While we wait we can say thank you for our community, our hope, and that God continues to bless us with young people—further reminders that God is not done with us or our world!



Rev. Drew Phillips
Minister to Families

- Luke 21:25-36
- Luke 3:1-6
- Luke 3:7-18
- Luke 1:39-45, (46-55)
- Luke 2:1-14, (15-20)

Enjoy the pictures taken recently of our children and youth, playing and praying—and put December 11 on your calendar! Come by Third, have a bite, play a game, and enjoy time together as we have and Family Advent Party!

So grateful to serve with you, Third!

Drew



Missions Moment

Third's Christmas Offering

November 21 to December 12

Please make checks payable to “*Third Christmas Offering*” and designate your desire to assist:

Children of Lebanon

\$45—for purchase of set of clothes and shoes. The ministry is directed by Dan and Sarah Chetti —advocates for domestic workers and human trafficking—through *INSAFF: Justice and Compassion for Jesus*—sponsored by the American Baptist Association.



or...

Children of Oak Hill Elementary, Saint Louis

a gift of \$15 will purchase warm clothing to combat the coming winter season. The ministry is led by Mira and Sasha Zivanov, CBF field personnel serving the immigrant community in and around Saint Louis. Beginning Nov. 21, during passing of the peace, please place checks under the painting of St. Louis and Lebanon by Grace Moore. If unable to attend in-person, please mail check to Third. In care of Christine McCarthy.



“Contribute to the needs of the saints, practice hospitality...” (Romans 12:13)

Musical Notes

Philip Barnes, Director of Music

This December TBC will once again enjoy the Christmas Rhapsody that was commissioned for our church from the British composer, Sasha Johnson Manning.

Performed by the Perseid String Quartet and pianist Gary Pedersen, it will feature prominently in the Carol Service on Sunday, 12 December, when it complements other pieces written by musicians born in Bowdon, Sasha's home in the UK. They include the distinguished composer John Ireland (1879 - 1962) who contributes several pieces for choir & keyboard, while our own Director of Music, (another 'Bowdonian') Philip Barnes, will lead his version of the traditional carol, The Lord At First Did Adam Make.

At this and subsequent services there will be opportunities to sing some of our favorite carols, even through a mask!



Adult Discipleship
Tuesday, December 7th
6pm through Zoom

The Art of Advent: Views
of Jesus' Birth from the
West and the East

Discipleship will return
again on January 4th.

Christmas Eve Service
5 p.m.
Sanctuary



EVERYDAY PEOPLE



EXTRAORDINARY GOD

A NEW EPISODE FOR THE PODCAST *EVERY KINDA PEOPLE* WILL BE AVAILABLE EACH WEDNESDAY FROM LENT TO EASTER – FIND IT ON THE THIRD BAPTIST WEBSITE

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 10 🎁 Candace Owen-Thomas
- 11 🎁 Karen King
- 14 🎁 Kelly King
- 20 🎁 Carson Wright
- 21 🎁 James Robins
- 23 🎁 Timothy Harrison
- 29 🎁 Gabi Moore
- & Bill Pearson
- 30 🎁 Connie Vohsen



In the city for good!

620 North Grand Blvd
St. Louis, MO 63103
Office 314.533.7340
third-baptist.org

Third Baptist Church Staff

Dr. Tommy Simons
PASTOR

Rev. Drew Phillips
MINISTER TO FAMILIES

Dr. Philip Barnes
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Ella Banks
RECEPTIONIST/OFFICE
ASSISTANT

Rasheed Smith
FACILITIES MANAGER

Timothy Harrison
CUSTODIAN

Brent Johnson
ORGANIST

Tom Kurtz
BUSINESS MANAGER

Lansin Lim Kimler
PIANIST

Christine McCarthy
FINANCE

Sally Stevenson
PARISH NURSE