

The Third PRESS



September 2018

“The Measure of Christian Maturity”

As we continue in our study through Paul’s letter to the Ephesians, our passage for reflection in this newsletter is from Ephesians 4:14-16.

In its context (including material reflected upon in the August newsletter) we read:

“It was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. (vv. 11-13)

“Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into Him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From Him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.” (vv. 14-16)

As I read the passage for this newsletter I was reminded of a National Geographic special I saw years ago on Tornadoes and Hurricanes. It was fascinating to watch while they tracked various storms.

Having grown up Chicago where we often had tornado warnings in the spring and summer months, watching those tornadoes on TV stirred some feelings of uneasiness within me. And I think my uneasiness was due, in part, to the apparent randomness with which tornadoes strike. Meteorologists can usually track a hurricane because of its size and steady movements but a tornado can be difficult. Although they can tell when the conditions are right for a tornado to occur, often they can’t determine when or where one will touch down -- until it’s too late.

As a child, my fear of tornadoes was intensified because I was told that a tornado is dangerous not just because it blows things around but because it can also blow things up. I was told that a tornado has that potential, because of its tremendous wind speed and fast movement thereby creating pressure differentials that can cause a house to explode – and so whenever we had tornado warnings we were told to open the windows to neutralize any pressure changes.

Now, whether or not a tornado could do that I don’t know, but it really doesn’t matter because if a Tornado ever got that close to our house it would be gone – one way or another!

I don’t like tornadoes or hurricanes, but they can give an accurate picture of the damage that can occur to the “Body of Christ” when the storms caused by the sin of humankind and the schemes of Satan touchdown upon a church.

However, unlike tornadoes or hurricanes, the worst type of storm that can hit a church doesn’t usually come from outside of the body, but from within -- from false,

115 Winter Street
Troy, NY 12180
283-2420

www.thirdchurchtroy.org
office@thirdchurchtroy.org

 ThirdChurchTroy

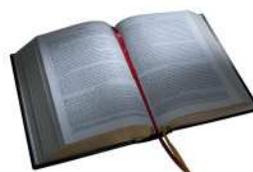
—
A community of Christ
-followers where,

The Head of the Church
is...
The Lord Jesus Christ

The Ministers of the
Church are...
Every Believer

The Passion of the
Church is...
to be Spirit empowered
ministers of
reconciliation to God,
inviting all people to
faith in Christ Jesus
our Lord and
to holiness of life.

—
Our Mission:
To Love our God and
Neighbor
To Proclaim the Gospel
through Word and Deed
To Make Disciples of
Jesus the Christ



doctrines and self-centered agendas that find their way into the church, and, over time, can blow things apart.

That's why Jesus said in His "Sermon on the Mount", "**Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.**" (Mt 7:15)

And why Paul warned the church at Ephesus saying, "**I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock.**" (Acts 20:29)

And so in "Ephesians" Paul exhorts the church to be united -- grounded in the truth which he proclaimed and following the leaders appointed by God -- because false teachers with false teachings will try to infect and destroy the "Body of Christ".

Like a growing cancer that turns a body against itself, false teachers can cause discouragement and disunity within the church, and thereby cause the immature in faith to fall into sin.

And like the strong winds of a tornado, the turbulence caused by false teachings can tear apart the church that is caught unprepared.

And so, in verse 14, Paul warned the body of Christ not to be like infants, tossed to and fro -- blown about by every wind of doctrine or by the latest and most exciting teachings.

Through this warning we're admonished not to allow ourselves to become confused by the schemes of those who would wish to use the church to advance their own agenda, or even worse, to harm God's people.

Unfortunately, as Paul indicates, such a state of confusion and disorientation is easy to occur among the spiritually immature -- those whose faith is childish, naive, and unstable. What's more, a church that functions at such a level exposes itself to many painful experiences and potential dangers, which is why Paul tells us that the church must not be "childish" regarding issues of faith.

But what does Paul mean?

After all, didn't Jesus say, "**Anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it**"? (Mk 10:14-15)

Yes, Jesus does encourage us to come to Him in "childlike" faith, but "childlike faith" is not the same as "childish faith".

Childlike faith asks questions always seeking deeper and clearer answers -- like the inquisitive toddler who asks why, and why, and why again! At the same time, childlike faith is willing to listen, follow and entrust itself into another's care even when all the answers have not been given or cannot be understood. Childlike faith is a faith that's willing to depend upon another because that other has shown himself dependable -- like the small boy who follows his dad wherever he leads because he believes his dad will keep him safe.

In turn, childlike faith is compatible with growing in Christian maturity.

However, "childish" faith reflects immaturity, because "childish faith" is like the young lady who tries on every piece of clothing in the store believing the advertisers who say that what she wears will satisfy her need for acceptance and significance, while she fails to clothe herself with those things that bring true significance -- like compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. "Childish faith" is like the man who believes that the value of his life is measured by the horsepower of his car, or the number of digits in his salary, or the prestige of the club to which he belongs -- but sees little value in his relationship with God or the spiritual leadership he brings to his family. "Childish faith" is a faith which focuses upon the self, and so, is willing to respond to any teaching that appeals to the self.

In turn, the person of childish faith can be made to believe most anything if it's packaged right. Hence the tremendous popularity of the health and wealth preachers of our day: men and women who want us to believe that true faith means we never need to be sick -- so pity the sickly apostle Paul and his weak faith; men and women who appeal to our greed and selfishness by telling us that God wants us all to be rich, and therefore, anyone who is not rich must not be honoring God -- so feel for the widow who foolishly gave all that she had to grow God's Kingdom; men and women who twist the Scriptures

while trying to pick our pockets and pollute our minds, speaking enough truth to sound credible, but enough lie to be deadly.

Paul knew the damage that false teachers could inflict upon the church because even in his day he encountered corrupt leaders who sought to gather their own followers within the church – all for the power and influence it brought them. Paul encountered false teachers who sought to promote themselves rather than Jesus Christ, and who proclaimed the gospel for personal gain rather than for the nurture of the believer and the salvation of the lost.

And we face such false teachers in the church today. And they find a home in the church because of the childish faith of so many who will naively follow the newest and latest “spiritual fads” like a bunch of children running after an ice-cream truck.

The “spiritual syncretism” of our day shows just how far people will go, not to find the truth, but to find someone saying what their itching ears want to hear. (2 Tim 4:3)

Now by “spiritual syncretism” I’m referring to such spiritual movements that attempt to attract followers by taking beliefs from many systems of faith and mixing them together to make an intriguing – although often self-contradictory – set of doctrines and practices that may taste great but are in truth less fulfilling.

And when I think of such religious movements I can’t help but think about how my children used to behave when they were toddlers. Whenever they saw Jen or me eating or drinking something the first words out of their mouths were “I want some”. Of course Jen dealt with this by hiding her stash of goodies until everyone was asleep – including me! My point is that many of the spiritual ideologies of our day are “I want” ideologies which grow out of a desire to please the self – so much so that any good they accomplish is driven by a self-centeredness. And that would be bad enough if these ideologies remained outside of the church. Unfortunately too many Christians live in the “I want” mode as well, whether it means more money, more power, more toys, more recognition.

But Jesus never promised that following Him would give us these things. Sure, He promised that those who would follow Him would experience joy, peace and the riches of eternal life in Christ! But He also spoke of persecutions, of taking up our cross and following Him, of becoming as a servant, of dying to self that we might live for Him – not the kind of stuff that sells well for the prosperity preacher! (Jn 15:20; Lk 9:23; Gal 2:20)

Now, lest we find ourselves becoming self-righteous, we need to consider how often we pray that God would give us faith stretching experiences -- even if it means more suffering, persecution, or hardship.

Christian theologian J. I. Packer describes today’s Christianity as “Hot Tub Religion”, with much that the church does being driven by the pursuit of personal pleasure, which in turn nurtures a “childish” faith that has no room for godliness with contentment, no courage to call sin “sin”, no understanding of holiness – neither of the holiness of God, nor the holiness that’s to be exhibited in the life of the believer.

Now, if childlike faith is okay but childish faith is not, how do we encourage the one and avoid the other?

And how can we mature in our faith, and together bring about a strong, growing, loving body of Christ?

Paul gives us the answer when he admonishes us to grow into Christ in all things, for He is the head -- the source of truth and the author of love. Moreover, Paul tells us in verse 15 that the growth we should exhibit comes about by means of “holding to truth”. This phrase is often translated as “speaking the truth in love” but that doesn’t express the full idea Paul is seeking to convey. After all, Paul is not just concerned about our speech.

Unfortunately, verse 15 has often been used as a validation for inflicting much hurt within the church, since some Christians think Paul is saying that we’re to tell other believers everything that’s

wrong with them -- assuring them, of course, that we're doing so in love! In other words, some have used this phrase, "speak the truth in love" found in verse 15 to validate the employment of their "spiritual gift" of criticism.

I'm sure you've run across this type of person. They usually say something like, "I really appreciate you but . . ." or "I really like you but . . ." or "I hate to be the one to say it but . . ."

Of course as Christians we are to help one another to grow in holiness. We are to encourage, exhort and even confront one another at times. And that means telling the truth even if it hurts. As a friend of mine used to say, "We all need someone who will tell us when our breath stinks." But, there's a big difference between the person who is telling us about our shortcomings for our benefit and growth, and someone who is criticizing us because it satisfies their need to express themselves. You know the person, the one who is frequently "led by the Spirit" to share what they think!

Did you ever wonder why they never say that they've been led by the Spirit to keep their opinions to themselves? (James 1:19)

Yes, it's important to be truthful and to do so with humility and love. But that's not the main idea of verse 15. Here, Paul is using truth as a participle modifying the verb -- to grow. Truth for Paul, in this context, involves content and action, right doctrine and right practice -- which together facilitate growth. This "truthing" demands an integration between what we know and what we think, say and do. We are exhorted to believe the truth -- not to be deceived by false teachers -- to know the right doctrine. But the truth of which Paul speaks involves more than just head knowledge. "Truthing" requires that our hearts take the truth of God that our minds have gathered, and, through that knowledge, stimulate our bodies to action -- submitting ourselves to God!

And so Paul's exhortation to maturity is based upon the truth -- truth defined by the very nature of God -- and truth which transforms our lives so that we believe the truth, and speak the truth, and live the truth -- and do all this in love, for God's truth is always inextricably linked with God's love.

This is Paul exhortation to "truthing in love" as presented in verse 15.

There's no place in Paul's theology for cold orthodoxy -- doctrinal truths detached from a loving relationship with God and fellow believers. Neither is there any place in Paul's theology for warm sentimentalism -- a desire for relationship with no commitment to truth. (see 1 Jn 3:18)

And so, in our passage today, the apostle Paul calls the church to Christian maturity. And such maturity, Paul says, involves the growing within us of the practice of "truthing in love", for Christian maturity requires the integration of absolute truth and unconditional love.

In turn, maturity as God defines it can never happen apart from a relationship with Jesus Christ, for Jesus alone is the source through whom truth and love can be experienced and shared, for He is the truth, He is love, and He is the head of the body -- the church -- those who live in Christ with Christ in them!

And so, as we consider how we can avoid the storms that seek to toss us away from God, the twisters that attempt to lift us up and dash us to the ground leaving the body of Christ broken and scattered -- as we wonder how we can grow up in our faith -- we learn from our text that mature believers submit to the direction and guidance of Jesus, letting Him sustain us and guide us even as He, as our head, guides us.

Growing into Christ in all things begins with childlike faith in Jesus the Christ, who is the Head of the Church and source of truth and love. And then, through Christ in us, we learn basic principles -- principles of good and evil, right and wrong -- which determine how we, as people created in the image of God, ought to behave. And these principles and their subsequent precepts are most clearly presented to us in God's Word, the Bible.

Therefore, to mature Christians, along with submitting to the head-ship of Christ, we must be diligent in our study of God's Word so that we may discover His principles and practice His precepts. And this must be a regular discipline for all God's people of all ages.

As we do this we not only learn truth but we grow in love, because, when we prayerfully study God's word with the goal of knowing God better, we can't help but fall deeper in love with God and His people, discovering with each new insight a God who is unwavering in His faithfulness and overflowing in His mercy.

Growing up into the Head, Jesus Christ -- becoming mature members of the body of Christ, means: that we know the difference between right and wrong; that we know that truth exists; that we know that love unites; that we know that the two, truth and love, come together perfectly in one person, Jesus Christ; and, that we know that we're to live so that truth and love are both integrated in us as the body of Christ, and radiate from us into all the world as the light of Christ. (Mt 5:16)

And so our passage today exhorts each individual to move toward maturity as a believer, to learn about God, and to live out the truth of the gospel. But more than being a passage for the individual, this is a passage for the community of faith. For, we are interconnected, one with another, even as in a human body every cell does its part to form the organs-and-bones-and-muscles-and-blood, all of which work together to form a living organism.

And, for the organism of the church to survive, and to fight off those things and persons that seek to tear it down, all parts of a body must be doing what they were created to do, which means that, every member of Third Church must be using his or her gifts for the ministry of the church -- as is needed at this time in this place.

Many years ago I saw the movie "The Witness" with Harrison Ford. Its primary setting was in an Amish community in Pennsylvania. And, at one point in the story the Amish community gathered together to help build a barn for one family. Everyone planned ahead for this event with every man, woman, and child having some part to play in raising that barn -- whether it was pounding nails, cooking food, or gathering up debris.

The community joined together, each using his or her skills to for the achievement of the greater goal at hand. It was a job done in love with the cost of the project being shared by all.

That scene was all the more powerful because it reflected reality -- for that scene was a portrait out of the lives of the Amish people. And in that one scene we obtain a glimpse of what God calls us to be and do when He exhorts us to build up the body of Christ in love, to join together in ministries of compassion and mercy.

The Amish built that barn in one day because they knew what had to be done and they knew how to do it. The Amish knew that the type of community in which they claimed to believe, and to which they were dedicated, meant nothing until it was lived out in humble service one-to-another. Moreover, their service reflected their love, which substantiated the truth by which they lived. They were about the business of "truthing in love". They were displaying maturity in Christ.

Paul tells us that we've been given leaders to help us grow into the full measure of Jesus Christ -- to be Christ-like. But in order for us to grow into mature disciples of Jesus -- in order for us to know the mind of Christ in such a way that we would no longer behave as infants led astray by every wind of teaching -- we must be about the business of "truthing in love". We must submit to the headship of Jesus Christ each day. We must study and learn the truth about God, and God's truth about us. We must serve together in the ministry of building up the body of Christ -- putting the needs of the community of faith above our own wants. And, we must proclaim the truth of the kingdom of God -- sharing the "Gospel of Salvation" to a world that struggles with discerning what is true from what is a lie.

And, we must do all this in love -- to the praise and glory of the One and only One who is the Truth, Jesus Christ our Lord.

May the Lord bless you in your service to His world as part of the "Body of Christ" at Third Church.

Grace and peace to you,

Pastor John

Help Fill the Shelves at Hope 7's Food Pantry!

Hope 7's food pantry serves families in need right here in our own community. The need is great and has been growing every year!

During the month of September we will be collecting hygiene items.



Donations of other non-perishable food and hygiene items will also be accepted.

General Financial Update for July

	Year to Date	July
Total Income	\$ 97,237.50	\$13,291.00
Total Expenses	\$100,259.55	\$14,253.63
Difference	\$ (3,022.05)	\$ (962.63)

September Birthdays

9/1 Philip Nolan
 9/3 Sally Nolan
 9/3 Kirsten Whitman Hope
 9/7 Cassie Phelan
 9/7 Joshua Reynolds
 9/20 Ethan Whitman
 9/24 Jaime Miller



September Anniversary

9/19 Deena Dominy & Howard Solomon

Serving This Month

September 2nd

Worship Assistants: Pastor John, Natalia Multunas
 Greeters: Deena Dominy, Alice Bentley
 Head Greeter: Rob Jensen
 Nursery: Jen McAuley and Irene Ofori
 Communion: Sue Laz
 Fellowship Hosts: Sue Laz

September 9th

Worship Assistants: Eric and Jesse Ofori
 Greeters: Jen McAuley and Pat Gilmaier
 Head Greeter: Peter Laz
 Communion: Jerry Whitman, Jen McAuley, Natalia Multunas, Sue Laz
 Fellowship Hosts: McAuley Family

September 16th

Worship Assistants: Sue Laz, Dean Calamaras
 Greeters: Dean and Doris Calamaras
 Head Greeter: Andy Miller
 Nursery: Deena Dominy, Jen McAuley
 Communion: Rob Jensen, Sue Laz, Vera Whitman, Alice Bentley
 Fellowship Hosts:

September 23rd

Worship Assistants: Deena Dominy, Ella Miller
 Greeters: Valerie Bidwell, Vaughn Skarzynski
 Head Greeter: Rob Jensen
 Nursery: Diane Lewinski, Lois Pasinella
 Communion: Andy Miller, Bill Multunas, Doris Calamaras, Deena Dominy
 Fellowship Hosts:

September 30th

Worship Assistants: Eric and Jesse Ofori
 Greeters: Deena Dominy
 Head Greeter: Peter Laz
 Nursery: Irene Ofori and Alice Bentley
 Communion: Eric Ofori, Jason Laz, Jennifer McAuley, Jerry Whitman
 Fellowship Hosts: Ofori Family



Remember in Prayer...

Our Shut-ins at home:

Tillie Herman, Marcella Goard,
Hazel Landry, Jan and John Pedersen

At the Eddy:

Dot Multunas, Edna Wells

Those dealing with health issues:

Stan Bentley, Kelly Valerio

Our Church:

Pastor John and the Session

Our Community:

Those who don't know the Lord
Those dealing with financial difficulties
That our schools would be places of safety

Our World:

Missionaries serving around the world
Open doors for sharing the Gospel message
Persecuted Christians around the world

Dan serving in Africa:

Pray for the local believers that they will
grow in this season in a new way.
Pray that he will be refreshed and recharged
in is time away.
Pray that he will be able to finish well as he
heads towards the end of his two year
commitment.
Pray for the ministry with refugees that he
has the chance to work with now.

Our college students:

Brian Giddings (Roger Williams)
Joshua Multunas (Gordon Conwell)
Alida Sceccitano (Boston College)
Natalie Sceccitano (Houghton)
Angelina Solomon (SUNY Albany)



Our next Sunday school class will be held
September 16th following the worship service.

Bible Quiz for September 2018

At the end of August we began a new sermon series on Paul's first letter (that we have) to the church at Corinth. And so, our Bible quizzes over the next months will come from selected chapters of "1 Corinthians" with the focus of this quiz on chapters 1 and 2.

1. In Paul's introduction in this letter who else did he name as a fellow worker?
2. Fill in the blanks: "_____ and _____ to you from God our Father the Lord Jesus Christ."
3. True or False: Paul wrote that in Christ the church at Corinth has been enriched in every way.
4. From whose household did messengers come to Paul to inform him about divisions in the church?
5. When Paul spoke of divisions, he identified four groups who were following four different teachers. Who were the four different teachers that Paul named?
6. Fill in the blanks: "Jews demand _____ and Greeks look for _____ but we preach Christ _____: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles."
7. True or False: While defending his message Paul reminded the church that he came to them with powerful and moving words that offered a reasoned defense of the truth of the gospel.
8. Who does Paul say "searches all things, even the deep things of God"?
9. True or False: Paul claimed to have come to Corinth speaking words taught to him by men like Peter and James.
10. True or False: Paul claimed that followers of Jesus actually have the "mind of Christ".

Mission Updates

“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms” 1 Peter 4:10

Your giving to Third Church enables us to support many varied ministries, both locally and around the world. The funds given and the prayers offered for our various mission partners are greatly appreciated and we wanted to share some of the thoughts and comments we have received from those we support.

From Perry Jones (Capital City Rescue Mission) – “Your generous compassion is helping to provide our homeless neighbors in the Capital Region with thousands of nutritious, hot meals, shelter and other vital care. Thank you. Your gift not only provides physical nourishment, you also help fill the emptiness of our city’s homeless and hungry neighbors by offering spiritual hope. Your support of Capital City Rescue Mission is a true blessing to our entire community.”

From Joshua Multunas (Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary) – “After getting back from Dubai, I almost immediately jumped into a summer course, which has now finished up. This was my second preaching course, and was a lot of fun! We all had opportunity to preach twice to our classmates, and it was fun to see different peoples’ styles. We had a great group and we were able to give each other really helpful feedback. The professor also gave a lot of really helpful feedback. This was great timing as my church here has given me opportunity to preach in a couple Sundays, which I really look forward to!

I have one more course this summer, which I am now doing the work for, and then get to take a week off with my family. Then, international students begin arriving in the States, and as the RA of my dorm, I get to begin my duties officially.”

From Dan (in East Africa) – “This summer I’ve had a chance to be involved in some really great ministries. Before leaving Africa, I was able to spend about three weeks doing outreach with a team from the States in Tanzania. It was a fun time of fast paced ministry and a chance to do outreach and share the Good News in a fun and more open environment. After being a part of the short term team I headed to England where I had a two week leadership training event with my organization. I learned a lot and had a great chance to grow and gain new skills that I hope will help a lot in my future. Now that the training is over I’ll stay in England for a few weeks till I head back to Djibouti September 2nd. In England I’ll have a chance to relax a little and be in a church community and be in an environment that can help me to rest. I also have a chance to do some really unique ministry while I’m here. I’ve been volunteering at a refugee center and doing some English lessons there and playing soccer with the guys. I’ll keep doing that until I head back to Djibouti.

I’m looking forward to this month to have a little time to get refreshed and reenergized but I’m also looking forward to getting back to Djibouti and seeing the people that I’ve been building relationships with and sharing with for the past year and a half.”

From Ronald McDonald House – “The need for a “home away from home” for families with seriously ill children is greater than ever. Thanks to people like you, we can provide the help and hope that is so needed.

Your wonderful gift of \$200 allows us to offer families a place to stay, home cooked meals, the service of caring volunteers, and help with the many needs that arise when a child is seriously ill. These families are at the heart of all we do. Your support allows us to assist these families during their time of need.”

From Niki Campbell (InterVarsity at RPI and Russell Sage) – “We are about to enter an exciting time. A time of busyness, but also of discovery. Discovering who God has brought to us, and what God is doing on campus. I am excited to be able to share with you the ways we will be seeing God at work. Thank you for standing in the gap and holding us in prayer.”

Growing in our Faith



September brings a return to familiar routines for families as kids head back to school. Bedtimes are earlier. Alarm clocks are set earlier. Mornings are often hectic with everyone trying to get out the door on time.

September is also a good time to check-in on where we are in our relationship with God. Perhaps you stayed on track throughout the summer with your Bible study, prayer and worship commitments. If so, good for you!

If you have gotten off track in your spiritual disciplines, now is a good time to refocus and establish some good habits.

To grow as disciples takes work on our part. We must be diligent in our worship attendance and not let other activities draw us away from gathering with our faith family for worship on Sunday mornings.

We should be spending regular time in prayer and in the study of God's Word – both individually and corporately. To that end Third Church offers various opportunities to gather together for Bible study (Wednesday evening study, Sunday school, Men's and Women's Bible studies) and prayer (see the article on Prayer Ministry in this newsletter). Perhaps now is the time for you to join in with those groups.

There are also resources available in the narthex for you to take and books in the church library that can be borrowed to help you in your spiritual growth.

If you do not yet have a relationship with Jesus there are also resources available in the narthex and in the church library to help you in your seeking to know God. Pastor John and any of the Session members would also be happy to talk with you about what it means to have a relationship with Jesus.

Our prayer is that each one of us will take advantage of the opportunities and resources available to us to continue to grow in our faith.

Prayer Ministry

Prayer is a vital part of the life of the church and the life of a believer. As we pray for one another we strengthen the entire body of Christ. Prayer helps keep us focused on what we are to be about as God's people in this place. The Upward Ministry Committee offers several ways for you to participate in the prayer ministry of Third Church:

There are two opportunities to gather together with others to pray - **every Sunday morning from 8:30 – 9:00 and the 3rd Sunday of the month from 12:30 – 1:00**. The focus of these times is to pray for the morning's activities, for our community and those who don't know the Lord, and any special needs within the congregation. Times of spoken prayer and time for silent prayer are included.

There is a **prayer sheet** printed every week and available in the narthex for you to pick up and take with you for use in your times of prayer during the week.

Included in the Order of Worship each week is an **outline for prayer** that you can use throughout the week to guide your prayer time. Some prayer concerns are listed and you can use the space to write in any joys or concerns raised on Sunday morning.

Each month's issue of the "Third Press" includes a **Prayer and Bible Reading Calendar** that lists specific people and ministries to pray for each day.

There is a **prayer chain** that prays for needs as they arise. If you would like to be added to the prayer chain, please speak with Sue Laz.

We encourage you to participate in as many of these activities as possible. Prayer keeps us focused on God and when we keep our hearts and minds centered on God, He will accomplish great things through us.



Calling all Cookie Bakers.....

“A new semester, and so many more students to meet! Cookies allowed us to meet, talk to and encourage more than 500 students at RPI and Sage. By promising to deliver homemade cookies, students asked us to come visit them. And we did so at least 4 times to each person who signed up for cookies. We saw people join us for our meetings, we saw people ask us questions and we saw people happy we exist on campus...just because we delivered homemade cookies to them. We would like to see how much more God will do with cookies this semester!” – Niki Campbell



If you would like to assist Niki and the Christian Fellowship at RPI and Sage in their outreach to students by baking cookies please speak with Sue Laz. Due to possible allergy issues please no nuts or peanut butter.

International Student Picnic September 8th from 1-4 pm at Brunswick Church

*Did you know that every year approximately
1200 international students from over
80 different countries live right
around the corner from us at RPI?*

You are invited to attend to find out more about the Horizon's ministry with international students and how you could be involved. It is also a great opportunity to just spend time with and interact with the students to learn about them and to welcome them to the U.S. For many of the students this is their first time away from home and friendly faces are a great first step in making them feel welcome here.



Please call the Brunswick Church office at 279-3792 for more information.

SESSION MEETING-THIRD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH-AUGUST 13, 2018

ACTION ITEMS

1. A motion was made, no second needed, and carried unanimously to authorize the expenditure of up to \$1,000 from the Building Fund for replacement of the two ceiling fans in the Sanctuary.
2. A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to accept, with deep regret, the resignation of Jerry Whitman as Clerk of Session and Elder at the end of the calendar year 2018.
3. A motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously to accept, with deep regret, the resignation of Vera Whitman as Elder at the end of the calendar year 2018.

CLERK'S REPORT

- Miscellaneous Information:
 - Average attendance for July 2018 was 38.
 - Membership roll remains at 56.

UPWARD MINISTRY

WORSHIP & PRAYER

- Choir will begin again on 9/9/18.
- Perry Jones will be preaching on 9/30/18.
- Choir will begin again on 9/9/18.
- World Communion Sunday is October 7th. Sal Sceccitano is putting together a slideshow.
- We will be doing the Thanksgiving Breakfast/Worship again on Thanksgiving morning.

INWARD MINISTRY

CONGREGATIONAL CARE-Visitation, phone calls, and cards are an ongoing ministry. Thanks to Doris Calamaras, Alice Bentley, Jerry Whitman, and Vera Whitman.

OUTWARD MINISTRY

OUTREACH & MISSIONS

- Spending for August 2018:Capital City Rescue Mission-\$500.00, Reach Across (Dan McAuley)-\$300.00,InterVarsity at RPI & Russell Sage College-\$500.00,Gideons International-\$500.00
- We have been presenting a series of Minutes For Ministry on sharing our faith. Deena Dominy is scheduled for September 2nd and Eric Ofori is scheduled for September 30th.
- Our goal is to show that there are a variety of ways to share our faith and to get all of us thinking of how we might share our faith with those who don't know Jesus.
- We are looking to hold a series of events that will address questions of faith.

September 16th, 6-7:30 PM

Is the Bible reliable? What does the Bible teach us about God and about Ourselves?

November 18th, 6-7:30 PM

Who is Jesus and Why does he matter?

- There will be an introduction, the presentation, time for questions, and refreshments. childcare will be offered.
- We will be doing another order for church t-shirts and we will be offering tote bags and long sleeved t-shirts in addition to t-shirts and sweatshirts.

STEWARDSHIP

GENERAL FUND/FINANCE

- We had a negative cash flow during July of \$962.63. this gives us a year-to-date deficit of \$3,022.05
- Unrestricted cash balance \$41,910.50
- Manse Investment Fund \$116,770.70

PROPERTY

- We are reviewing previous estimates as well as procuring new ones. Will update as information is received.
- Minor masonry repairs were made to the front of the church building with no cost to the church.

PERSONNEL-Reported on the upcoming retirement of Peggy Siracusa, Secretary on 9/30/18.

NOMINATING

Will be presenting the following slate to the congregation on October 14th. Andy Miller, Dean Calamaras, and Deena Dominy for three-year terms and Jen McAuley for a two-year term.

Questions of Faith



Do you ever wonder...

If the Bible is true?

What God is like?

What the big deal is about Jesus?

What the church is all about?

The Outward Ministry Committee will be offering a series of presentations to answer these and other questions of faith. We would ask you to consider who you know that might be interested in learning more about what it is that we, as Christians, believe and then invite them to come with you to learn and ask any questions they may have.

September 16th, 6:00 – 7:30 PM

“Is the Bible reliable? What does the Bible teach us about God and about ourselves?”

November 18th, 6:00 – 7:30 PM

“Who is Jesus? Why is he important?”

Each will include a brief presentation and a time for questions and discussion. Light refreshments will be served.

Bring your questions and find answers that will transform your heart and mind!

Third Presbyterian Church
115 Winter Street
Troy, NY 12180

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



THIRD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

EXALTING GOD / PROCLAIMING CHRIST / MAKING DISCIPLES