December 2022

Third Presbyterian Church

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While I was waiting for a connecting flight in Denver in November my wife, Peggy, told me the bad news.

I was devastated when I heard what she said. One of our oldest and dearest friends had passed away. I knew she wasn't doing well, but I was still not prepared for the crushing news. I was so overwhelmed with grief I started crying in the terminal. I don't cry easily. I spent most of my life in the Army and in the Army, we suppress our emotions. We keep them in in check and yet, here I was publicly blubbering in a terminal. Someone tried to talk to me, but nothing came out.

When I arrived home later that evening, I dreaded walking into the front door. As a matter of fact, I actually stood around outside for several moments before going inside. I knew I'd see her everywhere. I knew there would be memories everywhere I turned. I felt lost without her.

I'd known her since 2006. She actually spent an entire year with Peggy during my last deployment. Long combat deployments are hard on spouses. She comforted Peggy. She watched over Peggy. She kept Peggy from pulling away completely from the world. It was our third deployment and each successive deployment took a harder and harder toll on Peggy emotionally. Let's be frank. Peggy never knew if I would come back. She never knew when someone might show up at her front door dressed in a Class "A" uniform to tell her something had happened to her loved one. She dreaded going out where well-meaning people would ask how she was doing. She didn't like breaking down emotionally in front of people so she didn't. Our friend was the one who provided solace and comfort daily to Peggy during that trying period and now, she was gone.

Sure enough, when I walked into the room where she had slept, I felt my throat get tight. My eyes started welling up with tears. I wanted to talk to her. I wanted to hold her. I wanted to tell her one more time how much I loved her. I felt so sad. Neither Peggy nor I could talk about it. It was too hard.

My friend was named Mia. Mia was our ten-pound French poodle. She joined our family in 2006 when she was a puppy. Mia was a bit odd. Unlike like some dogs, she didn't run to the door when you arrived home and she didn't lick your face with kisses either. She'd more likely wonder over when she heard the door open to ensure it wasn't someone trying to break in and when she recognized it was you, she might wag her tail slowly at you or she might just turn around and walk off. She was also a night owl. She'd get up at 10:00 pm like clockwork and walk around the entire house as if she was patrolling a perimeter. She'd stay on guard for several hours sometimes. We were grieving over the loss of a member of our family. We had lost a dear friend.

During the holiday season many of us will grieve. We may grieve the loss of a beloved friend and member of our family. The holidays are an amazingly wonderful, colorful time, but they can also be a difficult time for many of us emotionally.

Facts on Loneliness During the Holidays

- 55% of Americans feel lonely.
- 75% of Gen Xers feel lonely.
- 37% Experience Depression
- 36% Experience Grief
- 34% Experience Anxiety

In the November/December issue of *Presbyterians Today* (2022), the magazine shared statistics about how people feel during the holiday season.

- Overall, **55% of Americans reported experiencing loneliness** during the Christmas Season. That means if you two people, one of them is feeling lonely and sad. In America we have over 300 million people which means we're talking about 150 million people who will struggle with loneliness during Christmas.
- Unbelievably, the group that said it experienced the most loneliness during the holidays were twentysomethings and college age young people. A whopping 75% of them said they felt alone. In the super-connected social media age, 75% of them felt cut-off. They wanted someone with whom they could connect.
- Millennials, who are those who born from 1980 to the early 1990s, reported that 64% of them felt lonely during the Christmas season. The figure is mind-boggling. Two out of three of those in their thirties experience loneliness. This forces me to look at this age group differently.
- **How do these feelings of loneliness manifest themselves**?
  i) 37% said they feel depressed.
  ii) 36% said they grieved.
  iii) 24% said they felt anxiety.

These figures tell us in compelling language that loneliness is rampant among us during the holidays and that it has serious mental health consequences on our society. What can we do? Here's four things you can try.

1) **Be sensitive to those around you**. Hurting people are all around us. All of us are taught to wear masks from an early age and we've all earned Academy Awards for our ability to mask our feelings! Be attentive to those around you in December. Look around you for someone whose demeanor has changed or looks withdrawn or lethargic. Those might be signs of a person who is going through a difficult time.
2) **Ask how you can help people**. Christians help people. In the world an employee might be instructed to say to a customer, "**How can I help you**?" The employee may or may not mean it, but we do as Christians. When a blind called out to Jesus for help, Jesus asked the man, "**What can I do for you**?" (Mark 9:51, *The Message*). Unless we ask people where they are and how we can help them, they won't tell us. They need to be asked. When we ask how we can help them, we give them permission to tell us.
3) **Listen**. Just listen. Give people a safe place where they can talk to you and then them share whatever they might want to say. It might be they feel sad and the sadness may come out as blubbering as it did for me in the airline terminal. It could be they feel alone. Or it might be they are angry. Whatever it is, just sit with them and listen. Let them feel whatever they want to feel. Do not feel like you have to fix either. We can't fix them, but we can listen.

4) **Reassure them that you care for them as a person**. One of the most amazing features of the Christmas Season is the story of Jesus' birth from Matthew chapter 2. In Matthew 2, Jesus' parents were instructed to name Jesus, "**Emmanuel**." The word Emmanuel means God is with us or *God is with you*! During Christmas and indeed all year long, we want to know we are not alone. We want to know God is with us. When we reassure a person that we care for them we become Jesus to them. We let them know God is with them by our presence. We can also do that by saying to them, "**I care for you as a person**."

Pastor Larry

"The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling,

but in rising every time we fall."

Nelson Mandela,

Former Prisoner, Nobel Peace Prize Winner, and President of South Africa

Nelson Mandela in Prison

"In the end, it's not the years in your life that count.

It's the life in your years."

President Abraham Lincoln

A Blind Hellen Keller touching the face of President Eisenhower

"Life is either a daring adventure

or nothing at all."

Helen Keller

"You have brains in your head.

You have feet in your shoes.

You can steer yourself in any direction you choose."

Dr. Seuss

Third will begin a period of transition in January. As I leave the congregation, it is critical we all remember several things.

- **We are a Team at Third**. We stick together. One of the things I learned early as a person was it's not helpful to play the blame game. I've played the blame game, but I learned it was not helpful. It's best to address issues in a positive fashion. Pray about the issue. Ask God for discernment and guidance. Ask what your options are, decide on an option and then; this is most important, step out in faith to follow the Lord Jesus.
- **We are Christians led by the Living Lord Jesus Christ**. Jesus is with us. He's here. He's guiding us. He'll provide for us. He'll empower us. Jesus will lead us.

- **We embrace change**. The world around us will change but the Bible tells us "**Jesus is the same, yesterday, and forever**." Jesus is the same. He never changes. We do not fear change. We embrace it. We are Change R Us in the church!

- **We support the Pastor**. Pastors need affirming church members and friends. Find ways and places to affirm every pastor. They are broken as you know from being around me. They experience temptation. They have doubts. They are under attack from various sources. Please pray for the pastor. Pray for the pastors and ask them how you can pray for them. They may not know how to answer your question at first because pastors are not asked that question often but keep asking it.

- **We push forward no matter what the challenge is.** Each person quoted on the previous page is admired around the world. Nelson Mandela was beaten, isolated, and imprisoned for years in a South African prison because he believed every person was equal. He never quit. Abraham Lincoln was called names when he became president. For example, he was called a gorilla. He was ridiculed. He was criticized by people even in his own family. People routinely tried to kill him! Helen Keller was blind and yet; she learned to write and speak in the late 19th century. It was an astonishing achievement. She gave every person who was disabled hope. Dr. Seuss taught children positive truths that has affected generations of them now.

The point is we each can choose to move forward. Of course, we can also withdraw. We can complain. We can quit. Or we can keep going.

Our forefathers and mothers in the Bible kept going. Jesus kept going. Moses kept going. Deborah kept going. The Apostle Paul kept going. Esther kept going. We keep going with the Lord and His people. As Dr. Seuss said so well, we can each make a choice. "**You have brains in your head.**

You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself in any direction you choose." At Third, we will chose to keep going forward as a church family together into the future God has for us.

Pastor Larry

The Life Changers Book Club

The Life Changers
Fall Book Club Selection

"*Why Not the Best*?"
by President Jimmy Carter

- The book provides insight into how President Carter used his Christianity to navigate challenging periods in his life.
- The former president describes one encounter with a Navy officer that changed his life.
- While we may or may not agree with the former president, we may discover life lessons that can help us along the way.

The Book Club will Meet In-Person at the Church
Thursday, December 15th
6:00 to 7:15 pm

Pastor Larry will Facilitate the Discussion
Delicious Goodies will be Provided

The Discussion May Also be Done via Zoom
For a Zoom Link Contact Larry

Third Salutes All Those Who Helped Prepare and Serve the Thanksgiving Feast

Thanksgiving Dinner is about to be Served
Kayla Shepard is at Center

Those Helping

Stacy Apelt
Judith Apelt
Matthew Sipe
Shawn Sipe
Tom Maxwell
Fred Holtz
Kayla Shepard
Mary Ann Shepard

Special Thanks
Timothy and Efay
our beautiful
Nigerian Friends!

Many Thanks to
Mary Ann and Kayla Shepard
For Serving on the Cleanup Detail

Noel Wallace Returns
To Third to Give an Update
Sunday, December 18th

Noel Leaves in 2023
to Become a Missionary to Asia
Noel is from First Presbyterian in Norfolk
Third is Supporting Noel

Noel Wallace
Future Missionary

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Pastor Larry Preaching

Sunday, December 4th
Sunday, December 11th with a Special Guest
Sunday, December 18th
Saturday, December 24th

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Christmas Eve Service

with the Sacrament
of the Lord's Supper

Virtual and In-Person Service
5:30 pm, Saturday, December 24th
Third Presbyterian Church

Pastor Larry's Mediation
"***The Jesus Nobody Wanted***"

Third's Values

Value #1
We Believe God is Good and
God is in Control

Value #2
We Keep God First

Value #3
We Value Every Person

Value #4
We Go to Church Because
It's Good for Us

Peggy Russell's New Address

Peggy Russell

Address: Aspire at West End
5020 Sulky Drive, Apt. 415
Henrico, VA 23228

Phone: 757-387-9301

THIRD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PRAYER TEAM

Prayer Request Form

"*The Power Lifters*"

How can we pray for you?

Date Prayer Requested: _____ Name: _____

Cell/Text: _____ Email: _____

Prefer to be contacted by Cell, Text, or Email? _____

Prayer Request or Prayer Update: _____

Who would you like to share this prayer request with?

_____ Pastor Larry Only – If Pastor Larry only email to larrytoney1998@gmail.com

_____ Pastor Larry and the Prayer Team – Send Prayer Request to the Facilitators Below

_____ Pastor Larry, the Prayer, and the Congregation – Send Prayer Request to the Facilitators Below

Prayer Team Facilitators:

Judy Floyd – Cell/Text: 757-237-2395 Email: sapelt@cox.net

Di Ricks – Cell/Text: 757-576-6097 Email: diricks91@gmail.com

Guidelines:

Each Prayer Request is handled with discretion and will only be shared with those you indicated above.

Each Prayer Request is prayed over for thirty days. After thirty days if you'd like us to continue to remember the request, please renew it again.

Please Update the Prayer Team on the nature of your request as you are able.

"The prayer of a good person has a powerful effect."

James 5:16

Join Us For Worship Every Sunday

In-Person and Live Stream at 11 am

Below is the Zoom link where you will be able to see those leading worship and along with parts of our liturgy. Below is the new and updated link, phone number and password as of July 13th.

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/605837516?pwd=V0R5VmNCQ2Mraml1TFdOVXpGMEpiQT09

If you do not have computer access, you can call in with your home or cell phone using Zoom's dial in option.

Meeting ID: 605 837 516
Password: 23518
Phone: 312-626-6799

Christmas Finger Food Fellowship

Sunday, December 18th immediately following worship

Hosted by the Worship Committee

Please join us after worship to celebrate the Christmas Season. We ask that you bring your favorite holiday finger food and/or dessert to share. The committee will provide punch and coffee. If you have any questions please see Amy, Carol, or Teri.

Offerings

Total Offering - Nov. 6 - $2,006.90

Total Offering - Nov. 13 - $1,224.41

Total Offering - Nov. 20—$1,129.90

Total Offering - Nov. 27—$2,186.10

Office Hours

Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 9am-1pm. Please feel free to call or send an email, if you need any assistance.

Live Stream Reminder

The closed captioning that you see on your screen can be controlled on your screen.

There is a cc button at the bottom of the zoom video you will need to turn off.

Or you can look under settings to change the size of the captioning if you would still like to retain the closed captioning.

Dec. 1—Ryan Ratcliff
Dec. 2—Debbie Platte
Dec. 3—Kenny Howard
Dec. 5—Claudia Cary
Dec. 9—Peggy Toney
Dec. 13—Alexis White
Dec. 13—Brandon Griffin
Dec. 13—Inda Ratcliff
Dec. 13—Ron Ratcliff
Dec. 14—Holly Gaff
Dec. 14—Teri Howard
Dec. 15—Morgan Howard
Dec. 17—Artie Derrenbacker
Dec. 23—Kenneth Howard
Dec. 25– Cheryl Holtz
Dec. 29– Chuck Olejasz

Most Asked For Addresses

Anne Basnight
Lake Taylor Hospital
1309 Kempsville Road
Room 31A Dogwood
Norfolk, VA 23502

Judy and Tim Cook
5079 Easy Street
Mobile, Alabama 36619-1763

Carter Griffin
Pearson Hall West
Room 113
310 Alumni Mall
Blacksburg, VA 24061-9502

Brandon and Laura Griffin
7521 Ripplepointe Way
Windermere, FL 34786-5594

Lexi White
1419 Spruce Drive
Holbrook, NY 11741

Prayer List

Please remember the following people and families in your prayers, that they might be lifted up through your conversations with God:

Cheryl and Fred Holtz & Family
Claudia Cary & Family
Di Ricks
Peggy Russell and Family
Tina Apelt
Clara Barnes
Jessica and Ray Fitzgerald & Family
Ginny Davis
Steve Glover
Larry McKinney
Anne Basnight and Family
Darlene Pick
Kitty Ribaudo
Ruth Bray
Holly Gaff
Nancy Babor
Laurie Morrissey and her mother
Chris and Michelle Adams
Coralie Draper
Janet Cortez-Nichols
Pastor Larry and Peggy Toney
Our Church
The Session
Our Country
The World

amazonsmile
You shop. Amazon gives.

Type smile.Amazon. Sign in with your Amazon account info. It will give you a list of charities, choose Third Presbyterian Norfolk, VA & every order you do with Amazon will donate on a quarterly basis a percentage to the Church Please pass this info along to your family and friends!

Shepherd's List 2022

Teri Howard

757-274-3311

Claudia Cary
*Dee Glover
*Steven and Claudia Glover
Ginny Davis
Jessica Fitzgerald & Family
Nancy and Vernon Barham
Dorothy Grandstaff
Larry and Peggy Toney

Dennis Griffin

757-618-3005

Marguerite Duke
Betty Hart
Susan Howlett
Peggy Russell
Carol and Tom Maxwell
T.J. and Larry McKinney
Stacy Apelt and Judy Floyd Apelt
Lexi White

Tom Maxwell

757-531-9851

Cheryl and Fred Holtz
Teri Howard
Janice daSilva
**Brittany French
Dave and Jenni Joyce
Kitty Ribaudo
Shelli Quales
Holly Gaff and CJ Jones

Nancy Babor

757-588-7501

Susan Mayo
*Dolores Ominski
Darlene Pick
Debbie and Ray Platte
Amy and Dennis Griffin
Ginny Keisel
Di Ricks
*Dee Curtis
*Anne Basnight

Stacy Apelt

757-583-5872

Jennifer Lavallee & Family
Ron and Inda Ratcliff
Meghan Powell and Geno Morgan
Tim Green & Family
Nancy Babor
Jim Rudiger
Malinda Hanna Davis

Jim Rudiger

757-588-5311

Michael and Teresa Gibbs
Joseph Bray
Ruth Bray
*Chuck and Suzanne Olejasz
Artie and Milinda Derrenbacker

*no email-please call
**Text
Red+Shut-in

Food Pantry

Calvin Presbyterian Church

2901 E Little Creek Rd, Norfolk, VA 23518 (757) 587-1591

- **Food Pantry Hours**
Monday, Wednesday and Friday
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

- Third Saturdays of the month
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

The food pantry serves Norfolk zip codes 23518 and 23503. Those in need of assistance may obtain a referral from any of the participating churches.

Pantry Wish List:

25 oz Apple Sauce
16 oz Baked Beans
24 oz Beef Stew
15 oz Peas
15 oz Green Beans
1 lb 13 oz Canned Fruit
32 oz Jelly
18 oz Peanut Better
32 oz Pancake Mix
24 oz Syrup
1 lb Rice
8.25 oz Tuna Helper
6 oz Tuna
15 oz Spaghetti O's
15 oz Thick Soup
64 oz Juice
12 oz Luncheon Meat
7.25 oz Macaroni & Cheese
13.75 oz Mashed Potatoes
13.7 oz Oatmeal Individual Packs
16 oz Spaghetti Noodles
26.5 oz Spaghetti Sauce
Dry Milk, Individual Packs

Please, no baby food, coffee, tea, sugar, pickles, olives, condiments, tomatoes, cranberries, canned milk, crackers or mushrooms.

Merry Christmas

MERRY
CHRISTMAS

December 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 7-9:30pm—Square Dance	2	3
4 Communion 11am In-Person & Virtual Worship 12:15pm-Special Reception	5	6 6:30-10pm Dance Group-C. Crofford-FH	7 6:30pm– Choir Practice 7pm AA Meeting	8 7-9:30pm—Square Dance	9 **FH– Christmas Party set-up for B. Hunt's childrens party**	10 10am– Clothes Closet **3pm– B. Hunt's Children's Christmas Party**
11 11am In-Person & Virtual Worship	12 **6pm– Nominating Committee Meeting**	13 6:30-10pm Dance Group-C. Crofford-FH	14 6:30pm– Choir Practice 7pm AA Meeting	15 7-9:30pm—Square Dance	16	17 **6:30pm Square DANCE GROUP– BOB CLINEBELL**
18 11am In-Person & Virtual Worship **Christmas Luncheon after Worship**	19 **6-9pm FH –Louis Braxton Christmas Party**	20 6:30-10pm Dance Group-C. Crofford-FH **6pm—Session Mtg.**	21 6:30pm– Choir Practice 7pm AA Meeting	22 7-9:30pm—Square Dance	23	24 **5:30pm Christmas Eve Service**
25 **CHRISTMAS DAY** 11am In-Person & Virtual Worship	26 **Christmas Holiday Office Closed**	27 6:30-10pm Dance Group-C. Crofford-FH	28 6:30pm– Choir Practice 7pm AA Meeting	29 7-9:30pm—Square Dance	30	31

Third Presbyterian Church
8065 Carlton Street
Norfolk , V23518

CHURCH STAFF

Dr. Larry O. Toney, Pastor
Debbie Platte, Secretary
Dr. Lexi White, IT Facilitator
Joseph C. Bray, III, Organist/ Choir Director
Clara Barnes, Sexton
Teri Howard, Clerk of Session
Holly Gaff, Treasurer
Nancy Babor, Financial Secretary

SESSION

Building & Grounds

Tom Maxwell

Stewardship

Witness & Outreach

Stacy Apelt

Worship

Teri Howard

Administration and Personnel

Dennis Griffin
Jim Rudiger

Presbyterian Women

Nancy Babor, Monday Night Circle

Presbyterian Men

Tom Maxwell, President
Fred Holtz, Vice-president

Memorial Committee