Dear Third Presbyterian Church family,

If you have ever thought to yourself, “Why do I exist on this earth?”, or wondered about God’s purposes for your life, you certainly are not alone—even pastors ask this question frequently. Pastors (though I am sure all Christians) also think about a similar question: “Why does the church exist?” The simple answer I often give is that the church is for worship and mission. Most actions of a faith community (should) fall under one of these broad categories. We also know but often forget that the church is neither a building nor an “institution”; it is us! We are the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:27). So, the question comes full circle: as a member of the body, “Why do I exist?” In short, we exist for worship and mission. In the very famous first words of the Westminster Catechism, we are here to “glorify God, and to enjoy him forever”.

Glorifying and enjoying God certainly concern the act of worship. Unfortunately, we tend to stop there and forget that it means so much more. Glorifying God is of course about worship, but it’s also about the way you live your life, the purposes you fulfill, and loving your neighbor as yourself—just to give a few examples. Loving your neighbor, getting to know him or her, and caring for their life is extremely glorifying to God!! Remember how Jesus responded to the question of which is the greatest commandment in Matthew 22:37-38? “[Jesus] said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’” Loving your neighbor as yourself can seem pretty ambiguous and daunting. How do we go about doing it? Where do we do it? What do we do?

One of the great blessings of the church is that it creates strength in numbers. God will, of course, use individuals to fulfill His purposes. However, quite often He works through a group effort. Here at Third, we are committing ourselves in two initial areas of outreach to our “neighbors”. (I will feature the second area of outreach in my December article.) The first is to continue our relationships with the people we met through the Summer Food Program at Crestview Gardens. I will be honest in saying that I’m not certain exactly what God is calling us to do there beyond building relationships. It can be tempting to make plans based on what we think someone else needs. This had been the mistake of world mission for centuries. But what we can do is spend time with people to learn where they are in life. Nearly everything a Christian can do in the world begins by forming and deepening relationships with others.

If you find yourself searching for something more and wanting to discover what God is doing in your life and the lives of others, I strongly encourage you to get involved with this outreach effort. Our first event since the summer will be November 2 (and may already have passed by the time you receive this letter), but mark your calendars for Saturday, December 14 as well. You are also invited to our monthly outreach committee meetings, which are held the third Tuesday of each month. Our hope is to spend time at Crestview Gardens at least once a month as we get to know our brothers and sisters better. Know that God can work in and through all things—this is just one of them!

Bless and be blessed!

Michael
Volunteers are needed to help deliver hot meals on Thanksgiving Day. If you can spare a few hours on Thanksgiving morning (November 28th) please see or call John Norris at 724-924-9628 or 724-674-2772. Thank You!

The Thanksgiving Service will be held on Sunday, evening November 24, 2013 Northminster Presbyterian time to be announced.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be held on Sunday, November 3, 2013.

The deacons are taking orders for poinsettias. The price will be $10.00 a piece. They can be in memory or honor of a loved one or friend. To place your order, please use the tear-off below and place it in the offering plate along with the $10 per plant. Deadline for ordering your poinsettia is Sunday, December 1st.

Yes, I would like to purchase a poinsettia.

Name ___________________________________________
In Memory of ___________________________________
In Honor of ___________________________________
No. of plants ______________

NUT ROLLS
The Mission Crafters will be making Nut Rolls in November. The cost per Nut Roll is $10.00. Please use the tear-off below to place your order.

Yes, I would like to order Nut Rolls.

Name ___________________________________________
Phone Number __________________________________
Number of Nut Rolls ____________________________
Number of Sugar Free ____________________________

MISSION CRAFTERS
Need volunteers to do nut rolls on Tuesdays November 5, 12, 19 & 26, 2013.

There is a sign up sheet on the bulletin board outside the Library.
**CARE PACKAGES** – At their November meeting, the Deacons will be packing eighteen “goody boxes” for those attending college and serving in the military. You can help by donating items that can be used to fill these boxes! Please place all donated items in the waiting room no later than November 4, 2013. They need addresses for these boxes. If you have current addresses please call the church office at 724-658-6683. Thank you!

We would like to thank everyone for the love and support we have received as we look forward to becoming parents. We appreciate your prayers and know our child will be blessed to be a part of this church family.

Michael and Christine Spicuzza

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

**THE NEXT PATHFINDERS GET-TOGETHER WILL BE AT PAGLEY’S ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 24 AFTER CHURCH SERVICE (12:30)**

**Operation Christmas Child**

There are still boxes at the church if you wish to fill a box. You may also donate money to the Mission Committee to buy items to fill boxes.

Bring your Shoebox in to church no later than **Sunday, November 10**.

Please remember to include $7.00 in each shoebox for shipping and expenses.

**Won’t you fill a box, or donate items to be put in one this Year?**

**Spotlight on the Christian Education Committee**

The purpose of the Christian Education (C.E.) committee is to ensure that the educational needs of the members of Third Presbyterian Church are met by providing a variety of opportunities for learning. Our goal is to spread God’s message to our church family, nurture our personal commitments to Christ, and encourage Christian discipleship. The C.E. committee chooses Sunday School curriculums and the Advent and Lenten materials. We are also responsible for recruiting volunteers to teach and/or assist with Sunday School, Junior Church, VBS, and the Nursery. Other areas which fall under the auspice of Christian Education are Youth Group events, the Young Adults group, and the Women’s Bible study. Current members are: Cheryl Norris (Chairman), Deb Matthews, Pastor Michael and Christine Spicuzza, Charlie and Karyn Weisz, and Wendy Wocjik. Please see any committee member if you are interested in serving on the C.E. committee.
PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN THANK OFFERING

The Thank Offering has long been a tradition of Presbyterian Women. It has provided and continues to provide much-needed financial assistance to numerous worthwhile programs not included in ongoing General Assembly mission support. Each year, domestic and international projects are carefully and prayerfully selected by the Creative Ministries Offering Committee to help meet a crucial need. Forty percent (40%) of this offering is used to support hospitals and community health programs that place priority in helping the most needy members of God’s community. The remaining sixty percent (60%) is used for new creative ideas for mission, undesignated in advance. The generosity of Presbyterian women and their families and congregations as demonstrated through their Thank Offering gifts help chosen recipients find real solutions for projects related to health, education, economic development, and needs of women and children.

There will be Thank Offering envelopes available on Thank Offering Sunday November 17, 2013 or in the church office.

Support a Seminarian currently enrolled in Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary’s Partnership Program.
Receive monthly updates on the seminarian’s studies and life.
For more information on providing prayer or financial support, contact Abby Pherson:
axp1048@sru.edu or 724-923-0135
Donors will receive a tax-deductible charitable contribution receipt.

“Prayer Chain News”

Do you feel that prayer is an important part of a Christian’s life?
Do you try and spend time in prayer on a regular basis?
If you answered “yes” to these questions then you may be interested in serving on Third Presbyterian Church’s Prayer Chain. Our prayer chain is alive and well but always welcomes additional members!
Prayer requests are received via emails or phone calls and then passed along to other members of the prayer chain. The prayer chain member’s only responsibility is a willingness to lift up those in need of prayer on a regular basis. We accept prayer requests for everyone, not just church members. If you have a prayer request, or are interested in joining us, please contact any member of the prayer chain. Members are: Cheryl Norris (captain), Nancy Gray, Carol Kaufman, Mabel Kocher, Joe Proch, and Carol Wyman.

THE MESSIAH
The presentation will be held on
Sunday, December 1.
at 3:00 p.m. at the
St Jude Episcopal Church
on North Mills Street
under the direction of
Harry Cunningham.
MEMORIAL CHRISTMAS TREE

The Worship Committee wants to remind everyone about the Memorial Christmas Tree. The large Christmas tree in the front of the sanctuary is our Memorial tree. We are asking all members who would like to put an ornament on the tree in Memory of a loved one, to buy an ornament and hang it on the tree. This ornament can be any ornament, maybe one that reflects a special interest in your loved one’s life.

The tree will be set up during the Hanging of the Greens. There will be tags available and the ornaments will be marked.

SATURDAY, November 30, 2013 at 9:30 a.m.

This is when the church and sanctuary are decorated for the Advent Season. It does not take long, but we do need at least 15-20 people to help. If we start at 9:30 a.m., we should be finished before noon.
HELPERS FOR JUNIOR CHURCH
Like talking with kids? Want to help youngsters trust in the Lord at an early age? We are looking for people to help out with Junior Church (held every Sunday when 2 or more children are present for worship). Junior Church typically lasts about 30 minutes, and lesson plans are readily available. Please talk with Cheryl Norris if you are interested in filling this great need!

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION
AT THE COVENANT HOUSE
We will be having a Christmas celebration at the City Rescue Mission’s Covenant House on Thursday, December 5 from 6-8 pm. We will gather with the women to make Christmas cards or an ornament, then share in fellowship and refreshments. A sign-up sheet is hanging in the lobby bulletin board. Talk with Christine Spicuzza if you have questions at (724) 202-6589 or christinespicuzza@gmail.com.

STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY
NOVEMBER 10, 2013
We once again come to the time of the year when we begin thinking about and planning for the upcoming year. One important aspect of planning is stewardship: caring for and properly utilizing all the resources with which God has entrusted us. One major resource that we all have (some more than others, including the church) is money. It is not just a matter of whether or not we have “enough”. It is too simplistic to say that we have too much or too little at any given time. I am constantly reminded of Luke 12:48 when Jesus says, “From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required; and from one to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be demanded.” Stewardship is not about how much or how little you have; rather it is about what you do with what you have.

THE NEXT OUTREACH EVENT
will be held on Saturday, November 2, 2013 from 12 noon to 2:00 p.m. at Crestview Gardens. We will be doing a meal, games and crafts. Come give a helping hand and join in the fun.

THE LOOSE OFFERING
from the two Sundays before Thanksgiving, November 17 & 24, 2013 will be used for the Hot Thanksgiving Meals that the Deacons will deliver Thanksgiving morning.

MISSION COMMITTEE
wishes to thank all of you for the gifts and or money given to the Kayento Mission Project. Eleven boxes were sent on the trailer to Kayenta Presbyterian Church on the Navajo Indian Reservation in Arizona which left on October 22, 2013. Items in the boxes included school supplies, 19 backpacks, 125 notebooks, 380 pencils, pencil boxes, crayons, scissors, etc., 5 new children’s winter coats, sizes 4 & 5, underwear, socks, 6 sheet sets, 2 blankets, 2 quilts, baby afghans and hats and other miscellaneous items. They are most grateful for all these items and appreciate our support. Thanks to all!
### November 2013

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