

3timbers CHURCH

ISSUE 2

DECEMBER 2019

*Connecting
people to the
transforming and
redeeming love of
Jesus Christ
through*

*PASSION,
POWER, and
PRESENCE*

**WORSHIP WITH
US!**

Sunday 10 a.m.

**PINE CREEK
ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL GYM**

**7801 North HWS
Cleveland
Boulevard in
Bennington, NE**



O Holy Night



Welcome to three timbers church. May the hectic pace of the past month give way to a peace-filled time of reflection on the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Please join us each and every Sunday morning at 10:00 a.m. for a time of fellowship, praise and worship as we learn what being Christ-followers means in our daily lives.

May our 2020 include a dedication or re-dedication to reading and studying the Word of God, growing our love and connection with family, getting to know our neighbors on a deeper level. May we be always looking for the ways Jesus is calling us to follow Him.



Staff

Getting to know one another...

Fingerprints of God



Teaching Elder Rev. Dr. Jeff Ryan

So often we think things just happen by luck or coincidence, never thinking they are really the plan and provision of God for our lives. As I look back over my life, I see the fingerprints of God all over it, shaping my life, molding me into the person He wants me to be. This process is ongoing. Growing up, my parents owned two pizza shops which meant not only did we eat pizza all the time, we worked all the time; hours upon hours making pizza, folding boxes and serving customers. God used this to show me the value of a strong work ethic and treating people kindly.

In high school, I was very involved in team sports, basketball and soccer specifically. I loved playing, watching and just talking sports, which I still do today. I thought I was just a normal high school kid in sports, but, God had other ideas. He used this experience to teach me about teamwork, working with others, striving towards a goal, and celebrating as a team.

When I went to college, The University of the Arts in downtown Philadelphia, I was surrounded by people who were very different from me. I was scared, alone, and trying to find my way in the world while being surrounded by atheists and agnostics. God used this time to show me what is on the other side of "hard" when we go through hard things in life. On the other side was learning that God would provide and protect me because He is gracious and loving.

After college, I got an internship with the Orlando Magic of the NBA, a dream come true, but more importantly, it was just another part of God's plan. God would show me that as wonderful as this was, it wouldn't fulfill me, only He could do that. Even after my internship ended and I went to work for Shaquille O'Neal as a personal assistant and saw money, fame and power at its zenith, I was still empty, I was still searching. I learned that money, power, fame and access were nothing compared to knowing God. All that life had to offer me would just leave me empty, unless I had a relationship with God through His Son Jesus.

God then brought a guy, ironically named Paul, into my life, who would become one of my closest friends, best man at my wedding, and an example of God's love. He lived his life for Jesus, never preached to me or told me how to live, just showed me Jesus. Because of him I got involved in a men's ministry which ultimately led me to give my life to Jesus.

God then called me to help and eventually become the team chaplain for the Magic, which I did for thirteen years. It was in those years that God made clear my calling to serve Him as a pastor.

As I look back, God used all of my journey to prepare me for what I am doing now. I see clearly His fingerprints on my life and look forward to seeing more throughout my life. It is only when we stop and look back and rule out luck and coincidence that we can see the fingerprints of God.





Upcoming Events

Join in the fellowship and outreach opportunities at three timbers church!
Check out these offerings; meet new people, and have some fun!

3tc Snow Day ~ Saturday, January 18th

Join us at Camp Rivercrest 9:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m

Food, Activities & Fun for the whole family!

Everyone is Invited - more info to follow!



Save the Date! three timbers church 5th Anniversary Celebration

Sunday, January 26, 2020

10:00 a.m. Worship followed by fellowship & luncheon.

Soul Sisters

Please join us & bring a friend!

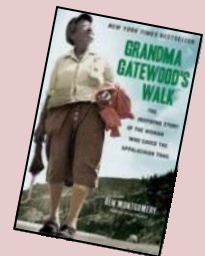
JANUARY BOOK CLUB

Tuesday, January 28, 6:30 p.m.

"Grandma Gatewood's Walk" by Ben Montgomery

Location: Bonnie Boone's, 501 S 174th Plaza, Omaha

RSVP to Bonnie at: Bonnie_Boone@hotmail.com



FEBRUARY BOOK CLUB

Tuesday, February 25th, 6:30 p.m.

"It's a Love Story; from Happily to Ever After" by Lincee Ray
(Repeat book from when icy weather canceled the November meeting!)

Location: Pam Mitchell's: 307 N 163rd Street, Omaha

RSVP to Pam at: psm3535@gmail.com



3tc Milestones

Baptisms - October 27 - The first baptisms of three timbers church.

Lillie Johnston,
Daughter of Mic & Nancy
Sister of Alec & Sam



Sabine Worner
Daughter of Garrett & Lorrin
Sister of Keegan



Joe Slabaugh
Husband of Afton
Leader of Youth Ministries



The congregation prays over the newly baptized.





Inside Inspiration...

Seeing the God Winks in our lives. God Wink: "An occurrence so odd and out of the ordinary, it had to be put in place by God. A wink from God letting you know you're in the right direction."

Some call it a "God Wink" - where you get 'that feeling' and instinctively know it is the Holy Spirit touching your life...

"**Inside Inspiration**" is one place to share your God Wink experience. **THERE ARE NO SMALL STORIES!!** Share the amusing, touching, exciting, life-changing ways God has touched your daily life... [Share at newsletter@threetimbers.org](mailto:newsletter@threetimbers.org)

God's Perfect Timing by Loreen Gehl

"This will probably be more meaningful for people that wear hearing aids! When the hearing aid battery runs out, the device announces "battery low," and soon after that it turns off completely. One recent Sunday, we were at Three Timbers, and my battery announced "battery low" right after the start of the service. Within minutes, my hearing aids were dead."

"The hearing aids remained dead until right as Pastor Jeff stood up to give his sermon, both hearing aids miraculously came back on! Within minutes of Jeff finishing the sermon, both batteries again went completely dead (and stayed that way). I took this as a real God Wink - God wanted to make certain I didn't miss a minute of His Word!"



♥
... And then
God Stepped in.

How is God speaking to you today? See it... value it... share it...
Enter "God Winks" in the subject line at newsletter@threetimbers.org

Follow three timbers church:





CONNECT! ~ Children's Ministry

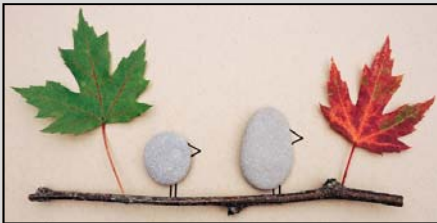
We believe that children should be taught about God from the Bible beginning at a very early age.

We believe that when the Gospel is taught clearly, that children are able to trust in Jesus Christ as their own personal Lord and Savior and are able to live in relationship with God, growing to know Him more each day.

'Tis the season for giving, which is exactly what our kids are learning in 3tc's Children's Ministry. Our little ones packed dozens of stockings with treats & sweets for all the faculty at each Bennington Public School. We delivered these presents along with handwritten cards thanking our educators for all they do!



- Christmas Program at Ridgewood Retirement Center -



BRANCHES ON WEDNESDAY NIGHTS

Resuming on January 15, 2020 - New Location!!

Treehouse Kids (grades K-5): Meet at Ignition Church (downtown Bennington) from 6:15-7:30 p.m.

Middle schoolers: Meet at Ignition Church (down the street from 3tc office-downtown Bennington) from 6:30-8:00 p.m.

Adults: Join **Brews and Q's at the Stumble Inn Bar** (1 block from the church office) for a time of study and discussion from 6:30-7:30 p.m.

For more information on Treehouse Kids, contact Garrett@threetimbers.org



CONNECT! ~ Pursuit Student Ministries

Let's face it, growing up is not easy. Family, school, friends, and even our own bodies can turn our world upside down on any given day in the life of a teen. Pursuit Student Ministries exists to help young people navigate these wonderfully chaotic years.

Our motto is simple, "Pursue God, Pursue Others."

December Special Music...



For more information on any Pursuit Student Ministries, contact Joe@threetimbers.org

Advent Devotions

Worship continues, even in "ugly" Sweaters!



Only cuteness here!



FINANCIAL CORNER

Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.
- 2 Corinthians 9:7

Tithing and Giving: Your 5 Questions Answered By Dave Ramsey

As the old saying goes: *We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.*

Three big principles of any solid financial plan are to save, spend and give. Most people forget about the giving part, though, because they think mostly about saving and spending. **But giving—specifically tithing—is just as important.** It softens the heart of the giver and frees their soul from dependence on money. You'll never walk away from giving feeling bad! Giving comes in many forms, with your tithe being the most important, because it's a biblical mandate.

What is a tithe? Let's start with the basics. Simply put, **the tithe is the first 10% of your income** that should be given to your local church. It's strictly measured in money, so you can't replace it with giving your time or your talents.

What does the Bible say about tithing? According to Leviticus 27:30 (TLB), "A tenth of the produce of the land, whether grain or fruit, is the Lord's, and is holy." And 2 Corinthians 9:7 (NIV) says, "Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

What's the difference between tithing and offerings? A tithe is an amount (a percentage of your income) and an offering is anything given beyond that, but not in place of the tithe.

After you've tithed, you can give in other ways: Giving a cash offering to your church above and beyond the tithe, giving money to a charity you support, giving to a friend or neighbor in need, or giving of your time or talents. **Not only does giving of your money or other resources generate good in the lives of others, it also generates contentment in your heart.**

Why should I tithe? The tithe was not put into place for God's benefit—He already has everything He needs. He doesn't *need* our money! (And "our" money is already His anyway.)

Tithing is an act of obedience and should be given *freely* with pure motives. In other words, we give without expecting anything back in return. And it teaches us to be good stewards of what God has given us.

Tithing was created for our benefit. It teaches us how to keep God first in our lives and how to live unselfishly. Unselfish people make better spouses, friends, relatives, employees and employers. And they usually have better finances. God is trying to teach us how to prosper over time.

Remember, no one has ever become poor by giving. But what about those times when you're wondering if your situation is the exception?

Other Common Questions About Tithing

1. Is it okay to pause my tithing during tough financial times? The Bible doesn't mention anything about "pausing" tithing. And it doesn't say we'll go to hell if we don't tithe. But get this: Many people have observed that after they stopped tithing, their finances seemed to get worse. In Malachi 3:8–11, God says that if you tithe instead of keeping it for yourself, He will pour out blessing and rebuke your devourers. In other words, He'll keep you safe from those who might harm you. So keep tithing.

If you can't live off 90% of your income, then you're probably struggling to live off 100% anyway, and that means you have bigger financial problems you need to address. It shouldn't require a miracle for you to get through the month with 10% less in your wallet.

If you sit down and look at your budget, you'll see you can make it while giving away at least 10%. That might mean cutting some fun money or increasing your income, but it can be done. Read the Bible and take from it what you will, but remember this: **If you tithe, do it out of love for God, not out of guilt.**

2. Is it right to count my church tithe on my tax returns? You were biblically obedient by giving your tithe to your church. The Bible tells us to be good managers of our money, but it doesn't shrink the value of your gift if you take the tax deduction. It is a way to manage the other 90% of your money. Take the deduction.

Later, when you get your income tax refund, remember it's money you've already tithed—although you're certainly welcome to devote some or all of it back to the Lord as additional thanks for His blessings.

3. If I'm not affiliated with a church, should I still donate 10% of my income? If you don't belong to a church, you can still give a percentage of your income to charities and philanthropies that are important to you. Think of what causes matter most to you, and align your support there. There are plenty of ministries and organizations that are doing great work and could benefit from a percentage of your income.

(Continued next page...)

4. Do I donate 10% of my income before or after taxes? And do I factor in income from side hustles? Honestly, whether you tithe from your gross pay or your take-home pay is entirely up to you. The point here is you're giving that 10% of your income. Dave gives off the top of his taxable income, but he'll be the first to tell you, "Just give and be a giver. It's about changing your spirit anyway."

As for your side hustle—the 10% should be a percentage of your entire amount of income. So if you take a part-time job on the weekends that brings in \$300 extra each month, add that amount to your total monthly income.

5. I'm making more money now. I want to know how to increase giving above the tithe. When things are going well and you find yourself with lots more income than you need, it can be easy to accidentally spend all that extra cash on yourself. But it should be a great opportunity to begin thinking about other ways to give above and beyond your tithe. That's why it's a good idea to budget what you'll do with the extra so you can make sure you're giving some of it too.

Once you've calculated your tithe, plus any saving and spending you're doing, see what your surplus is. Divide that surplus among extra offerings, extra investing, and some fun money. It might help to specifically budget a certain amount each month for special giving opportunities above the tithe. Then look around you—ask friends if they know of anyone in need, and watch for opportunities to give that money away. If you're intentional about seeking out those circumstances, you're going to find them!

And remember, whether you're giving a tithe, offering, or some other special contribution, it should come from your heart. It's an important part of any financial plan, and it's really the most fun you can have with your money!

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As of November 30, 2019

YTD revenue	\$265,990
YTD expenses	<u>265,188</u>
Net	\$ 802

Finance Trivia:

*School rent weekly is \$380 (\$340 to Bennington Schools and \$40 to Teresa for serving us!)
Utilities at our office run about \$450 a month. This includes trash pickup, MUD, OPPD and Internet*



DID YOU KNOW?? **You shop. Amazon gives.**

Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the charitable organization of your choice.

AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know. Same products, same prices, same service.

Support three timbers church by starting your shopping at smile.amazon.com

We'll keep you informed on the total amount received!

UPDATE!

The Amazon Smile deposit to three timbers church in November was:
\$72.03!

Year to date total: **\$161.16**

Stay Connected...

Have you moved this year?

Do you have a new phone number?

Have you opened a new email account?

Let us know!! rick@threetimbers.org and newsletter@threetimbers.org

Did you receive a "Save the Date" card for the 3tc 5th Anniversary celebration?
If not, please send your contact info to newsletter@threetimbers.org with
"Address" in the Subject line. We'll make sure to update the records ASAP!





Spotlight on our Young...

"But Jesus called them to him, saying, 'Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God.'" - Mark 10:14

Christmas Program..

Miss Sabine (Grandma) explains the true meaning of Christmas.



After Program Fun...





Getting to Know Each Other...

"But we your people, the sheep of your pasture, will give thanks to you forever; from generation to generation we will recount your praise." - Psalm 79:13

Help us "Get to Know" you! We have suggestions/ideas of areas you might wish to share - or go your own way! If interested, please use the Subject line "Get to Know" at newsletter@threetimbers.org

OUR MISSION PARTNERS



Investing in the neighbors and neighborhoods of North Omaha

Visit www.threetimbers.org/serving for details on how 3tc supports these Mission Partners.

Through the **Bennington Schools Foundation**, 3tc Life Groups were honored to participate in assisting families with Christmas needs.

The **Healing Kadi Foundation** will be taking a mission trip in January. Join us in prayer for this venture, and watch for ways to assist.

3tc was pleased to partner with **ABIDE network** for their Better Together Christmas Store ministry. Donated toys were gathered at 3tc on December 1st, and our members assisted with shopping and gift wrapping on December 14th.

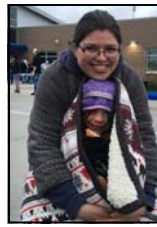




More 3tc fun & fellowship...



Trunk or Treat



Leadership Retreat



Donut Sunday



Bennington Foundation Fundraiser

"Blue Jeans & Blazers"



Pastor Appreciation Sunday



Volunteer Appreciation

