3 Imbers

ISSUE 5

NOVEMBER 2020

Connecting
people to the
transforming &
redeeming love
of Jesus Christ
through

PASSION,
POWER,
and
PRESENCE

~~ ~ ~ ~

WORSHIP WITH US!

SUNDAY 10 A.M.

In the Upper Room at NATE'S STUMBLE INN

15409 S 2ND STREET BENNINGTON, NE OR FACEBOOK LIVE

SEARCH FOR

THREE TIMBERS CHURCH
THEN 'VIDEOS'



The May 2020 newsletter was titled "Quarantine Issue" where many people shared how they were navigating the quarantine. At the time, it seemed it would be a hiccup in our spring/summer. As we now know, the quarantine has not been a short-term issue... it has become a full Life, Interrupted issue. Join us as we share some new endeavors, behind-the-scenes glimpses of how adjustments have been made at 3tc and in many lives and some stories of life interruptions both current and past.

May God's blessings continue to be upon us all...



A consistent theme in 2020 has been the need to adapt to this pandemic. Thankfully, being forced to adapt has actually helped our church reach big achievements this year!

One of those achievements is streaming our Sunday worship service. Another achievement is developing and releasing a podcast.

The "Life, Interrupted" podcast grew out of a perceived need to keep our church family connected with the Bible, even though we couldn't connect with each other.

Over the past few months, our podcast has been able to explain connections between life interruptions of today and some interruptions that affected men and women in the Bible.

We're excited to offer these conversations virtually anywhere you get your podcasts (i.e. Apple Podcasts, Spotify, etc.)! If you'd prefer not to listen through an app, our episodes are also archived at www.threetimbers.org, which means you can listen online anytime.

New episodes are released every month (usually two per month), so get connected with the "Life, Interrupted" podcast!









Life, Interrupted - perspectives

...from Pastor Jeff

This has been a year that none of us will ever forget! We have all learned so much about ourselves, technology, and the power of God's love. Through all the ups and downs of the lockdowns, social distancing and mask wearing, one thing has remained: love. The love that God has for us and the love that we have for one another.

With God's love we have been able to move our ministries online, with love all of you have been gracious as we learn to use this technology for God's glory. In love we have checked on one another, prayed for one another, rejoiced, and mourned with one another. God has made it clear that the most important thing is loving Him, and loving others, and three timbers has done a wonderful job at this.

As we continue to find our way through these unprecedented times, remember this from Romans 8:28: And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. God is working, even through these difficult days and we will all get through this together.

I believe God is bringing us closer to Him and each other, teaching us to depend on Him more and more, and showing us that as long we stay focused on His glory, we can walk through anything with hope.

If you need prayer, someone to talk to, or another need, please reach out to us; you are not alone, you are loved by God and His church.

...from Joe Slabaugh, Students' Minister

Three Timbers' youth ministry, Pursuit, has continued to meet throughout all of 2020.

While we had to restrict our meetings to virtual platforms last spring and summer, we are excited to be together again and have held in-person meetings since August.

Pursuit meets twice a week with a high school meeting on Sunday nights at Nate's Stumble Inn and a middle school meeting on Wednesday nights at the Bliss Barn.

All of our meetings incorporate health measures such as face masks, hand sanitizing stations, and disinfectants for the venues. Though it's a bit more work, we've been thrilled to catch up with all the kids who have come back to our meetings!

Currently, our middle school group has about 30 members and our high school has about 20. Pursuit is looking forward to finishing 2020 on a high note with Halloween parties, "Friendsgiving" dinners, and Christmas parties!

If you'd like more information about Pursuit or wish to sign up for our weekly newsletter, contact Joe Slabaugh at joe@threetimbers.org.

...from Garrett Worner, Children's Minister

WE ARE MEETING LIVE ON SUNDAY MORNINGS AT NATE'S STUMBLE INN!!!!

Here is some information for you on our new service held live every Sunday!!!

- -The kids are meeting in a separate room downstairs after we all worship together.
- -In the room, all kids maintain 6 feet distances at tables that seat 3 to a table (tables are big enough to seat 8).
- -Families are allowed to all sit next to each other without distancing.
- -Face masks are required; hand sanitizer is used before entering the room.
- -All materials used (crayons, markers, etc.) are either new each week or sanitized.
- -The room is disinfected before and after each service with the same chemical we are using in the upstairs service.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION ON THIS, PLEASE ASK!

(Continued next page)



Life, Interrupted - perspectives

(Continued) ... from Garrett Worner, Children's Minister

Questions?

Contact Mr. Garrett at

garrett@threetimbers.org



CHRISTMAS CAROLING

Dec 6 4:30-5:30 Ridgewood Senior Living and Surrounding Area





A special Christmas Pageant is in store for Christmas 2020! Participants have been busy working on recordings that Pastor Grant and I are mixing together to make up the Christmas Pageant. The pageant will be shown to the congregation the week before Christmas.

...from Grant Riesen, Worship & Creative Arts Minister

New Guy Perspective-

Albert Einstein was really onto something when he came up with his theory about relativity. Six months ago I officially joined the Three Timbers team and a month later Emma and I moved up to Blair, but yet it all feels as if it was yesterday. I think this has something to do with all that's happened in the Riesen household since the pandemic began, such as moving, getting a dog, and transitioning to new jobs (for both Emma and myself). On March 1st we were very blessed to attend Three Timbers as guests and we got to meet so many of you! It was truly wonderful. By the time we were officially part of the family however, we found ourselves in a place quite unusual.

Transitioning to a new church, I was really excited to get to know the new (to me) people that make up the congregation. However, due to the nature of the world at the time of transition, that was not something that was going to happen right away. My first month or so I had the wonderful opportunity to spend time mostly with the rest of the staff and one or two people that volunteered in the office to assist with our live stream.

As time went on I quickly got to know more and more people. This was done through events such as Friday Night Flix, dinners with people, and of course, Zoom meetings. Through all of this, Zoom may have been the most consistent medium of meeting new people for both Emma and myself. For instance, right away Emma was plugged into a Women's Bible Study over Zoom that she loved and got to meet a lot of the other women in the Church. As for me, all of my first interactions with my teams were over Zoom and our staff meetings are also held over Zoom. Zoom was even kind enough to have people's names appear directly underneath faces so I could quite literally put a name to a face.

The rest of the congregation I am meeting in doses, whether through events that the church hosts or Sunday morning I am slowly getting to know everyone. While it has been slower getting to know everyone than I initially would've liked, I count it as a blessing. It has given me the opportunity to develop deeper relationships with those that I have met. It also has let me get to know everyone at what is probably a much more natural pace.

So far everyone has been incredible. I have had only positive interactions with everyone at Three Timbers and am certain that will continue as I get to know more people. To those of you that I've already met or interacted with, thank you so much for making Emma and I feel so welcomed into the Three Timbers family. For those of you I have yet to meet, believe me when I say that I simply cannot wait for the opportunity to get to know you!



Life, Interrupted - behind the scenes

...from Grant Riesen, Worship & Creative Arts Minister

The Road of Technology in the midst of a pandemic...

It used to be that back in "the day" traversing from point A to point B was as simple hopping in your vehicle and driving from point A to point B, occasionally stopping to fill up the vehicle and purchasing ranch flavored Corn Nuts for your wife at the Casey's gas station. That was before March of 2020.

Now assuming that point A was before we implemented any live-streaming technology and point B is implementing all of our new technologies to have a hybrid "in person/live-streamed" church service, I believe that I, along with the staff and session, can safely say we are at least in the suburbs of our metaphorical point B. The trip however, was not without its speed bumps, detours, empty fuel tanks, and team of mechanics helping us keep the wheels on as we went along.

Our first online Church service was hosted from the office using only a keyboard for Sarah to lead worship on, a TV, one computer running slides, and a Macbook Air that live-streamed it all. The following weeks we added to that list by implementing a new technology to the line-up: a Lazy Susan. Through April 19th we kept the same setup and on April 26 we shook up our Audio/Visual (AV) a bit. Starting April 26th we started using a soundboard to pipe all of our audio into a software called OBS as well as a combination of phones and computers for several different camera angles also piped through OBS. From OBS we pushed the final product to Facebook Live. This setup largely stayed the same for the rest of our tenure in the office, though it wasn't always so smooth. May 3rd we ran into some issues as we discovered the limitations of our available technology and (though I can't remember the date) we also lost internet entirely for one service. Along the way we had worked with our internet provider to increase our available internet, which also helped improve our online experience.

On Sunday, August 16th, we moved our setup to the Stumble Inn for a dry run Service and the following week we held our first service back together in a hybrid format. In doing so, we swapped out our multiple camera angle system for a single PTZ (Pan/Tilt/Zoom) camera that catches the whole live stream.

Our audio is still captured by the board and put into OBS, but now with the added element of needing two mixes: one for in-house, one for online. This is done through what's called an auxiliary track (or bus depending on your preference) in the board. One bus carries all of our in-house information, the other all of our online.

Now our final setup looks something along the lines of: All of our instruments connect to the board, which splits into two separate busses (one for in-house, one for online), the online bus plugs into OBS through what's known as an Audio Interface. The PTZ camera sits behind the tech booth and connects to OBS via USB. Our slides are displayed on the TV still by casting over Apple TV. The audio is mixed, the camera gets set, and the final product is put all together on OBS. OBS is then routed on the computer to Facebook Live at 9:50 AM so we can have our 10 minute countdown and it's "away we go"!

Since March 8th we have grown a lot in tech and individually. We've learned that sometimes the route from point A to point B is long, (occasionally) tiresome, and frankly, never ending. Technology will continue to evolve, and we as a Church and as a Tech Team will continue to evolve with it.

This pandemic has definitely caused some empty fuel tanks, but praise God that He is the one who sustains and refills what is empty inside of us. While all of this growth was accompanied by growing pains, praise God that we're growing! Praise God that He's providing! Praise God for our church family! And praise God for His sovereignty.

I also want to take a second to thank all of our incredible volunteers that have helped us grow along the way. We as a church are blessed by an incredible Tech Team and we simply could not do what we are doing without them. Same goes for all of our volunteers on other teams as well! Thank you!

...And they do this Every. Single. Week. without complaint and without our knowing what all is involved. Thank you, and God bless you all.





















Life, Interrupted - behind the scenes

...from Garrett Worner, Children's Minister

Well, as you all know, it has been one crazy year! With that being said, 3tc continues to be an amazing presence, not only in the community of Bennington but in the metro area of Omaha and further!

It started when all of this craziness began, really by necessity as we did our best to start an online service. With the will of God and the talents that He has given all of us, we not only were able to start streaming our Sunday morning services but have put a level of professionalism on it that could only be accomplished by God's gifts!

Our worship online broke the walls of Bennington when we started to hear from people all over the country and the world who would tune in to worship with us! We continued to grow our online presence with adding First Tuesdays prayer and worship service, Wednesday night live for the Treehouse kids, an amazing Podcast called "Life, Interrupted," a Thursday morning men's group, an amazing Maundy Thursday online service, a community worship experience that was not only online but live and, with the calling of new worship pastor, Pastor Grant, an online presence through social media that has gone above and beyond anything we could have imagined.

So we might all be a little worn out by being online, but 3tc did not stop there. We all know our calling to be a presence in our community so we did a bunch of in-person events as well!

We started with our first "Goods Friday" where we all donated three truckloads of food and goods to the food bank in Bennington and to our partners at the Abide network. The kids decorated windows to show the love of Jesus, and they made pictures and notes of love to send to the Ridgewood retirement community. We had a terrific turnout as we gathered for a drive-in style community worship service with the other two churches in Bennington.

3tc continued to love on our community through the summer starting back up our Friday Night Flix at the park in downtown Bennington, inviting the community to get together, enjoy some sno-cones and watch a movie!

As school began in its various forms, 3tc once again prayed at each of the Bennington schools: prayers for administrators, educators, helpers and students. With abundant donations from the congregation, school hygiene kits were presented to Bennington schools.

We got back together with the Abide Network in the fall to serve in north Omaha and work on beautifying the neighborhoods and showing the love of God to our neighbors. Finally we were able to continue our in-service worship while still maintaining an online presence to our family members who elect to stay at home.

We are looking forward to all that God is doing through this year and into the future starting this fall and continuing through the advent season. Come join us as we continue to love on our community!!!

BLESSEN

Is anyone else simply amazed at what our staff has accomplished during this pandemic?

Remember... there was no warning, no opportunity to put together a "plan." But God had a Plan, and our staff & volunteers have worked tirelessly to implement His Plan. This - in addition to what the new "pandemic life" was throwing at them personally - is what it means to

"Get In The Game"

These Godly people have prayed, improvised, persevered, and remained steadfast in their goal to fulfill God's purpose in a very difficult time.



Life, Interrupted - then and now ...

How have life's interruptions affected your life?

...from DeAnn Johnson (former member, now living in Colorado)

(Since the beginning of the pandemic...) I have joined the women's Bible study in the church we attend. We have done two Beth Moore 11-week studies, before summer. We just started an 8 week study with Melissa Kruger, on Contentment. These studies are providing God's direction & truth during very challenging times. We use zoom & now some in person, within the "rules"! My faith has been strengthened through these studies!

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

...from Pam Mitchell

Life Interrupted: From Tragedy to Blessing

I've told the story of my mother's death eight years ago many times.

It was painful.

It was sad.

It was unexpected.

Timeline:

Sunday, February 26 - played the organ at church Wednesday, February 29 - went to the doctor Thursday, March 1 - hospitalized with terminal brain tumor Sunday, March 4 - moved to nursing home for hospice care Saturday, March 24 - passed away



There is so much I could share about this 30 days that changed our lives, like how I laid in a bed beside her one night when she had been non vocal for a couple of days and heard her having a conversation with someone on the other side saying the words I don't want to be old, I want to be new. Or how she claimed to have known her death was approaching before we did and purchased birthday gifts for all her grandchildren for the upcoming year.

But the greatest gift was yet to come in her final days!

Mom was a musician, and each spring she purchased tickets for all her grandkids to go to a musical with her. She had been asleep for about 2 ½ days at that time, not quite comatose, but not lucid either. The day of the musical arrived. Preparing for another long day, we came into her room that morning to quite a surprise! Not only was she awake, but she was sitting up in bed! Although she could not speak, she recognized us and was so happy to see all of us, passing out hugs and kisses and smiles!

No tears that day; just peace.

All the little ones arrived. Mom was so happy! She laughed and pretended to play the organ and lead the choir from her bed. It was a beautiful March day, and the staff helped us get her into a wheelchair. We took her to the courtyard where she watched her grandkids and great grandkids run and play! About 2:30 it was time for them to leave for the musical and Mom was getting noticeably tired. We took her back to her room and she went to sleep.

For the last time.

Our lives were most definitely interrupted in 2012, and I miss my mother every day. But in the midst of all the shock and sadness and pain, one thing stood out above all else . . . God was ever present! There was no denying it. Because that's who our God is!





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

Year-to-date, as of October 31, 2020: Revenue \$197,752.85

Expenses \$224,416.39

Net (\$26,663.54)

Note: We have paid \$3400 towards the 2020 Mission trip which did not happen due to Covid . We will get credit for this payment in 2021 from Praying Pelican towards next year's trip.

In His Service,

Rick Blunk Business Manager





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

As of August 2020, the Amazon Smile deposit to three timbers church:

\$587.41

Thank you for choosing 3tc!

UPDATE!

Stay Connected...





Have you moved?

Do you have a new phone number?

Have you opened a new email account?

So we can keep you up to date, please keep us up to date!

Let us know if you've had changes to your contact information! rick@threetimbers.org and newsletter@threetimbers.org



Getting in the Game... Upcoming Events

Get in the Game! Join in the fellowship and outreach opportunities at three timbers church...



CHRISTMAS CAROLING

Dec 6 4:30-5:30 Ridgewood Senior Living and Surrounding Area



Join us December 6th as we sing Christmas carols to the residents at the Ridgewood Senior Living Center and the surrounding area.

Stay tuned for more information.



Bennington Gives is an opportunity for the Bennington community to support the non-profits in their community during a 24-hour span starting on December 1st. Check out the non-profits on benningtongives.org and see our page at benningtongives.org/3tc

Join us this year as we once again partner with ABIDE for the Better Together Christmas Store event. This is an incredible ministry that 3tc participated in last year and are blessed to continue our participation this year.

To donate, bring new toys to either the office or with you to worship on Sunday mornings. You can donate up until Wednesday, December 2nd. For more information about this AMAZING program, click on "More Information" or "Sponsor a Child" at https://threetimbers.org/christmas-store-2020/

Join us if you are comfortable at the ABIDE's Christmas Store on December 12th.

To have questions answered or to sign up, email info@threetimbers.org.





Ugly Sweater Sunday is December 20th!

Join us for our yearly tradition of wearing our ugliest Christmas Sweaters!

On December 20th we ask you to wear an Ugly Christmas Sweater to church.

If you will be joining us online we ask you to take a picture of yourself in your ugly Christmas sweater and send it to info@threetimbers.org.

If you post the picture on social media be sure to tag us and use the hashtag #UglySweaterSunday so we can see your ugly sweater!



Christmas Eve is December 24th

Join us in the Upper Room at the Stumble Inn for our Christmas Eve Service as we gather to remember the true meaning of Christmas.

Stay tuned for more information as we get closer to the date.



Life, Interrupted - God's Calling...

Our very best wishes go with Tim and Kristy Hoins as they obey the call of God to service in California. If you haven't read their testimony, please see the "Quarantine Edition 2020" of the newsletter, available at threetimbers.org/newsletter.

Thank you, Tim and Kristy for your dedication to 3tc and the example you have set for us all. ▼▼▼





Friendship isn't about who you have known the longest but instead who walked into your life and said "I'm here for you," and proved it. This is exactly how I think of Tim and Kristy!! Over years of small group, kids events, workouts, and zip lining incidents they have continued to show our family and friends the true meaning of being there in mind, body and spirit.

Tim and Kristy's new congregation is so extremely blessed to have such an amazing couple to lead and worship with them. 3 Timbers and my family have been so lucky to have had a chance to learn and do life with the Hoins!

While I will miss my church husband and sweat sister, it is not goodbye, but see you soon.

Love, The Lueders



It has been such a blessing for Jaci and I and our children to know Tim & Kristy Hoins and their family.

We joined the church the same year as Tim & Kristy and were in the same New Members class back in 2003, having no idea that we would become part of such a close group of friends together. We have watched each other's children grow and have been in several small groups together. We have shared highs and lows and grown closer to Christ through all of it.

Tim & Kristy have always been a great example for us of guiding parents, people of faith and generous friends.

The Hanford Church will be truly blessed with Tim - a Pastor grounded in scripture and with Kristy - a tireless prayer warrior.

We wish them all the best – and send them with our blessings and prayers, looking forward to continuing down God's path with them, just in different physical locations.

Lee & Jaci Goldhorn





Life, Interrupted - God's Calling...



To say that Tim and Kristy will be missed is an understatement.

They have tirelessly given their time, talents and friendship to so many. Their leadership in our small group and classes along with the men's breakfast group has led our family to have a deeper relationship with Christ.

They have been such good friends in times of peace, chaos and personal crisis. We are so happy and thankful to have them in our lives. Sad to know that they won't be around the corner, but so excited for this new journey they are finally starting. We can't wait to hear what God does through these two because they will do amazing things for His Kingdom.

We may not be close in distance, but they will always be in our hearts and we look forward to the time we can be in each other's company again.

Love, the Liffring family...

Tim and Kristy,

I still remember the very first time I heard Tim preach. My memory tends to be selective these days, so I do not recall the passage, but I do remember *feeling* the message and thinking, *Wow! Tim's a natural!* I even emailed you to share how it had touched me.

I still feel that way when you preach, Tim. You have been gifted with the ability to deliver a message with serious knowledge of Scripture and the right amount of humor. You know how to keep your listeners awake! Your words reach out in a very practical way so we can take them with us.

Kristy, you and Tim have raised a wonderful family and given of your time and talents to those around you for years. I can honestly admit that I completely admire your decision to listen to God's voice leading to make such a big change at this point in your life. You deserve the very best. God got you this far, and he will not let you down.

I wish you the best! You will most definitely be missed here, but I know your new congregation is very blessed to have you on the way: hearts will be changed!

- Pam Mitchell

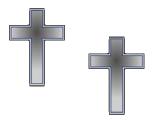




We have watched you grow in your faith over the last several years at Covenant and Three Timbers and know you will do awesome things in California! They don't know how lucky they are!

We wish you all the best in your new adventure! Stay safe and keep in touch!

The Smith's







Getting in the Game...

"Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever."





Inspired by Pastor Jeff's sermon series on the book of James, Pam wrote the following poem and has graciously shared it with us. Thank you, Pam.



James 4: Walk Humbly With God - by Pam Mitchell

You ask, then complain, for you do not receive, But the Lord asks you, What do you believe? What is your motive, is it God's will Or your selfish desires you wish to fulfill?

You ask for things that bring earthly pleasure Rather than things you'll eternally treasure. You break the Commandments, then quarrel and fight, But deep in your heart, you know it's not right.

Submit to the Father and remember that time Is in the Lord's vision, not yours or mine. Though we may not agree. He knows what we need. In His own loving way, He's planting a seed.

If you act on temptations, to this world a friend, You must understand you will pay in the end. You've read the Scriptures, what is it you've heard? His spirit will guide us to live by his word.

So resist the devil and from you he'll flee; Have faith for God's mercy and grace set you free. Cleanse you hands, trust the Lord in all that you do; Come nearer to God, He'll come nearer to you

Temptation can make it easy to stray, But remember, a Christian can't have it both ways. You must show the Lord that your heart's purified And the things that you ask will not be denied.

Be humble, be lifted, don't slander your brother, For who are we to judge one another? There's only One who can judge or condemn, And we'll all stand before him. What will you do then?

He can save or destroy, give you life that's eternal Or send you on down to a lasting inferno. If you know what to do, you need to dive in, For failing to do so in God's eyes is sin.

Your life is a mist, you'll come and you'll go; Don't brag of tomorrow for you never know. God opposes the proud and those who would boast, So take care of the work that He'll treasure the most.

Make God's will your own and live like His son, For rewards await you when this life is done. Love one another and take time to pray, Walk humbly with God, He'll repay you one day.



Getting in the Game... Fun & Fellowship

ABIDE Network Ministry drive-by block party!







Zoom Bible Study: Beth Moore's Chasing Vines





Community Worship Service Drive-In





Tuesday Night Together









Life, Interrupted Podcast



Episode 1: Welcome

Episode 2: You Could Be in A Pit...

Episode 3: Audience of One

Episode 4: An Interview With...

Episode 5: Navigation Tribulation... and Vice Versa

Episode 6: Cliff Jumping

We're excited to offer these conversations virtually anywhere you get your podcasts (i.e. Apple Podcasts, Spotify, etc.)! If you'd prefer not to listen through an app, our episodes are also archived at www.threetimbers.org, which means you can listen online anytime.



Getting in the Game... Fun & Fellowship

Friday Night Flix







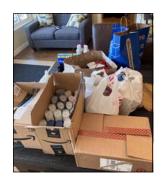






Hygiene Kits for Bennington Schools







Prayer for Schools - August 9th



Prayer is Powerful, and we're honored to pray for our schools. We pray for students and teachers, parents and administrators, as well as our community and country.



Our goal at Three Timbers is to provide you with a safe and clean space to come together and worship our wonderful God!

Below are some pictures of what we've been using to clean. The sanctuary is set up with an air purifier as well as hand sanitizing stations. All of our seating clusters are socially distanced and masks are highly encouraged. We also disinfect at the end of every week with a laboratory grade disinfectant called Sporicidin.









Getting in the Game... Fun & Fellowship

ABIDE Neighborhood Clean-Up









Trunk or Treat with the Bennington Jaycees





















