

Are you ready to board our StewardShip – The Spirit of Third Church? Our ship is coming in and will be here next week! Aren't you excited? I am very excited to see this ship and finally board it and begin the journey. The time to get on board the ship will be next Sunday.

I'm here to let you know what you need to board the ship. I've got my passport and my suitcase and my tickets ready.

What can you pack in your suitcase when you come on board The Spirit of Third Church? I suggest that you consider three very important things: Your Time, Your Talent and Your Treasure.

All of these things relate to the Ports of Call you heard about two weeks ago. As part of our trip planning, as on any cruise ship's sailing, you decide where you want to go when the ship docks in its ports of call. When you volunteer and give of your time and your talent and your treasure in any of the outreach programs of Third Church, you become an integral part of fulfilling the mission of Third Church. And you are contributing to increasing God's work here on earth.

Some of our Ports of Call are:

New Orleans - where our Third Church folks went to assist in rebuilding homes and businesses in the area devastated by Hurricane Katrina.

RAIHN – the Rochester Area Interfaith Hospitality Network, a not-for-profit organization of 35 faith communities that helps homeless families become self sufficient and independent. Our Third Church volunteers host the families 4 times a year in our church and provide beds, meals and a friendly welcome to those people going through very tough times.

Kenya – we're connected with a sister church and bring strength, comfort and financial support to the people of Kenya.

Many Third Church members are involved in Valley Manor, The Friendly Home, Kirkhaven, The Highlands, Cloverwood and other places. We celebrate the lives

of our many members who live there – they have much history and stories to share about their lives at Third.

The Food Cupboard provides emergency food services for hundreds of individuals who come for help throughout the year.

The Dining Room Ministry invites hungry families of our neighborhood to have a healthy lunch and fellowship with dignity on Saturdays.

At School 6 and School 35 our members tutor and mentor children, helping them with their school work as well as important life skills.

At the Corner Place, Upper Monroe Neighborhood children and families build community through learning, literacy and economic development.

Your gifts of time, talent and treasure can also be used to faithfully witness to God's grace and serve, whether it is in fellowship, worship, outreach, congregational life, music, education... This Spirit of Third Church has so many ways to get involved. Please consider ways you can give your time and talent to volunteer to help.

We realize that this is a most difficult time when it comes to financial contributions and that it is not a simple decision to make. All we ask is that you do your best and, if possible, increase your pledge by 5% if you have pledged before. If you have pledged before, but not last year, please renew your commitment to support the mission of Third Church. If you have not pledged before, we ask that you make a pledge at any level you can.

So – this week as you check your suitcase and see what you've packed, be sure to prayerfully consider what your pledge will be. Bring your ticket – your pledge card – next Sunday with your commitment and be ready to set sail with the rest of our passengers! It will be an exciting time! See you on deck!