

ST. TIMOTHY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

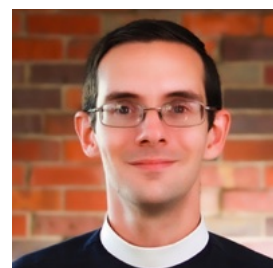
CONNECTIONS

A SEASONAL NEWSLETTER

The Ministry of Hospitality

Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. Hebrews 13:2

Hospitality was an essential virtue in biblical times, and we can find instructions and examples scattered throughout scripture of how to make family, friends, and strangers feel welcome. These days when we think about welcoming people to church, we often think in purely pragmatic terms about how to bring in new members. But regardless of whether someone is interested in being a long-term part of this community, hospitality is a spiritual practice to which all of us are called as Christ's disciples.



We all want to be part of a welcoming church, but how can we actually help visitors and newcomers feel welcome and get connected? It starts with recognizing that we are all greeters. While some people have a natural gift for connecting with new people, we should all assume the responsibility to welcome those at church we don't know. Many of us sit in the same general area of the sanctuary each weekend. That can make it easy to look around each week and check if there is someone sitting near us we don't recognize. Take the opportunity to introduce yourself, maybe at the Peace, but even better before or after the service when there's more time to chat. We sometimes feel a little awkward about introducing ourselves because we're not sure if someone is truly new or just new to us. If that's the case, there's never any harm in saying something like, "I don't think we've met before. My name's ____."

Another practical way to help welcome people is the classic "coffee hour hand-off." We've been blessed recently with a very active social hour after church! If you meet someone newer to St. Timothy's, be sure to invite them down to coffee hour. Then when you've chatted with them for a while, introduce them to someone else. That way, their time isn't monopolized by one person, but they also aren't left on their own in a room full of strangers.

One way we as a church are working to help newcomers get oriented is by rolling out Instant Church Directory, our new virtual directory. Directories can be very helpful in learning people's names at a new church, but paper directories are rarely on hand when you need them and quickly out of date. Instant Church Directory is accessible through an app on your phone, easily searchable, and instantly updates when a new family is added or someone's contact info changes. Read more about the Instant Church Directory on page 3!

While many of these actions may feel like little things, they can make a huge difference in how newcomers experience St. Timothy's. Together they can help us practice hospitality not just as individuals, but as an entire congregation.

UPCOMING

Program Year Kick-Off and Parish Picnic

Sunday, September 10

Christian Formation for all ages kicks off the Sunday after Labor Day. Please join us for a picnic in the Parish Hall following the service. Bring a side dish or dessert to share and enjoy fellowship as our program year begins.

WEDNESDAY *night* CONNECT

**Beginning Wednesday, September 20
6:30-8 p.m. in the Parish Hall**

New this fall! This weeknight adult formation opportunity offers us the chance to connect with each other, and connect our faith to our everyday lives. Light refreshments will be served. Our discussion will focus on the parables of Jesus and what they might have to say to us in our world today. If childcare is needed, please let Jeanie know at deacon@sttimothyiowa.org.



ADULT FORMATION

Adult Forum

**Sundays at 9 a.m. in Room 131 on the Lower Level
Sabbath: An Ancient Practice Meets the Modern World
September 10, 17, 24, and October 8**

Over the course of four Sundays (with October 1 off for 1st Sunday Breakfast), we'll explore the spiritual practice of Sabbath by way of a new documentary on the subject by Journey Films. The film explores the role of Sabbath in a wide variety of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim traditions. What role does rest play in our spiritual lives? What are the implications of Sabbath for the way we view labor in the modern world? For the way we care for the environment? We'll explore these questions and more in conversation together.

Bible Study

**Thursdays, Resuming September 7
9:30-11 a.m. in the Parish Hall**

Our Bible Study will begin the year by looking at the Book of Micah. Perhaps you are feeling hopeless right now—the world is in such a mess and doesn't seem to be getting better. The Prophet Micah offers a message of hope. Let's read this book together and see if we can find hope for our world today. Contact Jeanie if you are interested in joining by Zoom.

Books, Brew, and Banter

Fridays at 10 a.m. in the Parish Hall

A lively group of readers! We try to read fiction and non-fiction alternately. As September dawns, we'll be reading *The Dictionary of Lost Words* by Pip Williams, then *Forget-Me-Not Blue* by Sharelle Byars Moranville. Other books we're considering: *Lessons from the Edge: A Memoir* by Marie Yovanovitch (non-fiction); *Back When We Were Grown-Ups* by Anne Tyler (fiction); *Stolen Focus: Why You Can't Pay Attention – and How to Think Deeply Again* by Johann Hari (non-fiction); and *Broken for You* by Stephanie Kallos (fiction). Contact Jeanie if you are interested in joining by Zoom.

Instant Church Directory



Our church directory is moving online this fall! Beginning September 10, you will be able to access our church directory from your mobile device through the Instant Church Directory app. Unlike paper directories, the virtual directory is always as close as your phone and constantly has the most up-to-date information. Directories can still be printed for those who need them.

TO ACCESS THE DIRECTORY

1. Search for "Instant Church Directory" 🏠 in your App Store and download the free app.
2. Open the app and click the **Create Login** button.
3. Enter your email address that is in the directory.
4. Create a password and confirm it.
5. Click **Create Login**.
6. Check your email inbox for a message to verify your email address.
7. Click **Sign In** to see the directory.

At our Program Year Kick-Off on September 10, we will have parishioners on hand to assist those who need help getting the app, as well as the opportunity to update your contact information and get a new picture taken.

Only those with email addresses in our directory will have access through the app. If your email address is not in the directory, please contact the office at office@sttimothyiowa.org to be added.

Instant Church Directory takes the security of members' information very seriously. To read about the app's security features, visit instantchurchdirectory.com/online-church-directory-security.



OCTOBER

Blessing of the Animals

Sunday, October 1 at 4 p.m.
South Lawn of the Church

All creatures great and small are invited to the annual Blessing of the Animals. That includes pictures of friends unable to attend and your favorite stuffed pals. Inspired by St. Francis of Assisi's particular appreciation for all creatures of the earth, we will have a short liturgy of thanksgiving and then say special blessings for each pet. We will have a treat for each dog and cat as well.

Please make sure your pets are leashed, crated, or otherwise contained for their safety.

Diocesan Convention Weekend

October 21-22

There will be no services at St. Timothy's on Convention Weekend. Instead we encourage you to join with other members of the diocese for the Close of Convention Eucharist at St. Paul's Cathedral in Des Moines on October 22.

