



## Journeying to Bethlehem

In the service of Lessons and Carols, which we will celebrate this year on December 17, the opening Bidding Prayer begins with these words: “Dear People of God: In the season of Advent, it is our responsibility and joy to prepare ourselves to hear once more the message of the Angels, to go to Bethlehem and see the Son of God lying in a manger.”



As the prayer indicates, this journey to Bethlehem is one we make every year. Yet we must be open each year to the possibility that we will experience something new in the journey this time. And the season of Advent is indeed, for us, a journey. For much of the world, the final month of the year is already Christmastime. The lights are lit, carols are being sung, Christmas parties are taking place. But for us in the church, it is still Advent, a season of waiting and anticipation. The season can therefore be a reminder to us of a truth we often forget: that the journey is sometimes as important as the destination.

The word “advent” literally means coming, and this season is focused on both the first and second comings of Christ. We live in between those two advents. Jesus has come, yet we still live in a world of violence, with war in Ukraine, Israel-Palestine, and South Sudan among others, and with gun violence in our own nation. We look towards our destination, Christ’s second advent, when all the world’s wrongs will be righted and the Prince of Peace will reign. But even now, we are called to live out the reality of God’s Kingdom even as we are still on the journey. In that sense, our whole lives are like the season of Advent. We are always on the journey.

In the coming weeks, we’ll have the chance to enter again into the stories that lead us to the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem. Our Adult Formation in Advent will be based around a video series called *The Journey: Walking the Road to Bethlehem* from pastor and author Adam Hamilton. Everyone will have two opportunities to be part of this series, either on Sunday mornings at Adult Forum, or on Wednesday nights. I pray that revisiting these familiar stories from a fresh perspective will help us reflect on our own journeys with and towards Christ.

As the third verse of “Angels We Have Heard on High” summons us: “Come to Bethlehem and see him whose birth the angels sing; come, adore on bended knee Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.” Wherever this holiday season may take you, I hope you will take the chance to answer this call and encounter Christ anew.

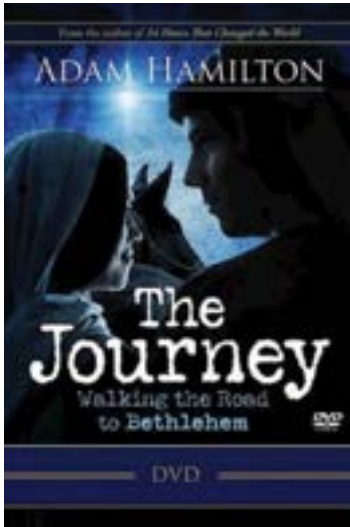


## The Greening of The Church

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**Sunday, November 26 following the 10:15 service**

Help us prepare our sanctuary for the season of Advent. The more hands we have, the faster it will go! Help set up the trees and add greens to our behind-the-altar display.



## Adult Formation Series in Advent

**Wednesdays Nov. 29, Dec. 6 and 13**

**6:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall**

**OR**

**Sundays Dec. 10 and 17**

**9 a.m. in the Gathering Center**

Take a journey with pastor and author Adam Hamilton as he travels on video from Nazareth to Bethlehem in this fascinating look at the birth of Jesus Christ. *The Journey* is shot on location in Israel-Palestine and contains exciting and informative sessions that will help us meet Elizabeth, Joseph, and Mary as real people, not just as characters in an all too familiar story. We hope you can join us on Wednesday evenings or Sunday mornings for this Advent Series.



# CHRISTMAS AT ST. TIMOTHY'S

### Lessons and Carols

December 17 at 10:15 a.m.

### Service of Remembrance and Hope

December 21 at 7 p.m.

### Christmas Pageant Service

December 24 at 10:15 a.m.

### Christmas Eve Service

December 24 at 7 p.m.

### Christmas Day Service at St. Paul's Cathedral

December 25 at 10 a.m.

# GIVING OPPORTUNITIES



## Angel Tree

This year, our Christmas Angel Tree will feature 10 families for whom we will provide a joy-filled Christmas. Our Angel Tree will be set up in the Parish Hall on November 26. On the tree will be an “ornament” with the name of one of our family members that includes some suggestions for gifts that the person needs or wants. Our task and delight is choosing an “ornament,” shopping for gifts for that person, wrapping them and bringing them back to church by December 17, when we will bless the gifts and deliver them to the families.

This is such a great time to involve all your family members in the joy of giving to some folks who are not as fortunate as we are. Look for this opportunity and help St. Timothy's be a beacon of God's loving light right here in West Des Moines.

## Second Offering Partners for Coming Months

DECEMBER 2023

**WDM Human Services**

**Angel Tree & Faith and Food Fund**

JANUARY 2024

**Seminary Support**

FEBRUARY 2024

**Simpson Youth Academy**

MARCH 2024

**Women at the Well**



## Christmas Flowers and Greens

Each Christmas, parishioners have an opportunity to make donations to provide for the flowers and greens that adorn our sanctuary. Donations can be made in memory of loved ones or in thanksgiving for the blessings in your life, and dedications will be printed in the Christmas Eve bulletin.

Please use the form available in your bulletin during Advent or make a donation online at <https://sttimothysiowa.org/donate/>.

If donating online, select “Altar Flowers” from the menu and include the dedication in the “Special Instructions” area. Contributions must be submitted by December 17 to have the dedication included in the bulletin.







Parish Picnic



High School Formation Breakfast Out



Newcomers Welcome Dinner

# JANUARY

## Epiphany Celebration

Sunday, January 7

Kick off 2024 by celebrating the Feast of the Epiphany! At 9 a.m. we will gather for our First Sunday Breakfast. In place of our regular Children's Formation, there will be Epiphany-related activities for children, including crafts, cookie decorating, and chalking the door.

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## St. Timothy's Day and Annual Gathering

Sunday, January 28

St. Timothy's Day is our yearly chance to celebrate our patron saint and gather together as a parish to look back on the previous year and ahead to what's to come. Following our service, there will be a meal in the Parish Hall, reports from ministry leaders, and the election of our newest vestry members. We hope to see you there!