



ST. TIMOTHY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

# CONNECTIONS

A SEASONAL NEWLETTER

## The Beauty of the Incarnation

“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.” *John 1:14*

Every year as we journey through the season of Advent and experience again the miracle of Christmas, we are brought back to this central truth proclaimed by the Gospel of John: that God entered into creation as a human person. This central truth, which we refer to as “incarnation,” isn’t merely a statement about an event that happened long ago. It’s a principle that governs our faith today. The physical world is not inferior to the spiritual. It’s not a place we’re just passing through. Because God entered into creation in Jesus Christ, what we do *in this world* matters.



When times are challenging—when the polarization of our society leaves us exhausted, when the immensity of the injustice in our world causes us to despair—we may find ourselves longing to escape this world. But Advent is the season of hope. If our hope were only in a purely spiritual existence after we die, then God would not have taken on flesh. The incarnation is God’s message that there is hope for this world, for a new creation. Christian hope is a confidence in God’s faithfulness that spurs us on to action, to making God’s dream for our world a reality.

Christianity has always been a religion of big ideas, but the incarnation stands as a constant reminder that those big ideas can never be divorced from the actual lives the followers of Jesus are living out on the ground. In 2025, we will mark the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea. That gathering in the year 325 first produced the Nicene Creed that we recite each week. The creed beautifully proclaims Jesus as “God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God.” At its heart, the creed was the church’s attempt to answer the questions “Who is Jesus?,” “What does it mean that God took on flesh,” and “Why does it matter?”

So why does it matter? If God entered into our world, then the goal of the Christian life can never be to escape from this world. The goal is to embody God’s presence in this world. God took on flesh, and even now Christ is not without a body on earth. For as we claim in our mission statement, we are his hands and feet and voice.

“We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14). As we move through Advent towards the celebration of Christmas, may we again encounter with awe the grace and truth that came into the world, and that continue to surround us.



## Christmas Pageant

**Sunday, December 22 at 10:15 a.m.**

If your child would like to participate in this year's Christmas Pageant, or if you would like to serve as an adult helper, please contact Sarah Bunch at [sj.bunch626@gmail.com](mailto:sj.bunch626@gmail.com). Pageant rehearsals will take place before the service on Sundays December 15 and 22.



## 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 [sttimothyiowa.org/donate/](http://sttimothyiowa.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.



# CHRISTMAS AT ST. TIMOTHY'S

## Advent Lessons and Carols

December 15 at 10:15 a.m.

## Service of Remembrance and Hope

December 21 at 5 p.m.

## Christmas Pageant Service

December 22 at 10:15 a.m.

## Christmas Eve Services

December 24 at 5 p.m. (with children's sermon) and 9 p.m.

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

December 25 at 10 a.m.

## GIVING OPPORTUNITIES



### Angel Tree

This year, we are adopting ten families for whom we will provide Christmas gifts! On December 7-8, you'll see the Angel Tree set up in the Parish Hall with "ornaments" detailing suggested Christmas gifts. Four of the families are from our own grocery ministry and the other six have been referred to us by West Des Moines Human Services. We are asking our parishioners to choose an adoptee, purchase gifts for that person, and return the gifts wrapped and tagged by December 22 so that we can bless the gifts before we deliver them to the recipients.

This is a wonderful way to celebrate Christmas with your family. It truly marks each of us as being the hands and feet of Jesus!

### Second Offering Partners for Coming Months

DECEMBER 2024

**WDM Human Services**

**Angel Tree & Faith and Food Fund**

JANUARY 2025

**Seminary Support**

FEBRUARY 2025

**Simpson Youth Academy**

MARCH 2025

**Women at the Well**

## ADULT FORMATION

### Adult Forum

Sundays, December 15 and 22 at 9:15 a.m.  
In the Gathering Center

This Advent, we will look at some of our favorite Christmas carols. How did they come to be? What are the words of some of the verses we don't know so well? What are your favorite carols? What might you be able to teach the rest of us?

### Wednesday Night Connect during Advent

December 4, 11, and 18 at 6:30 p.m.  
In the Gathering Center

During Advent, we will break from our usual concentration on the lectionary readings and instead focus on the two stories of the birth of Jesus, one from Matthew's Gospel and the other from Luke's Gospel. How are they alike? How are they different? How do we mix the two stories together to form the narrative that we are all familiar with?



# JANUARY + FEBRUARY

## Epiphany Celebration

Sunday, January 5

Start the year off right by celebrating the arrival of the magi at 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 26

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!

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## All Music Sunday

Sunday, February 16

After a successful first run in 2024, All Music Sunday returns this February! Parts of the normal liturgy, including the sermon, will be replaced with music as we celebrate the way music guides our worship of God.

If you have a musical talent, either vocally or instrumentally, consider contributing to our worship. All skill levels welcome! Please contact Don Agee at [ageedon@msn.com](mailto:ageedon@msn.com) and Kyle Carswell at [rector@sttimothyiowa.org](mailto:rector@sttimothyiowa.org) to participate.

