

ST. TIMOTHY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

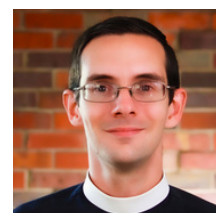
CONNECTIONS

A SEASONAL NEWSLETTER

Commending God's Works

"One generation commends your works to another; they tell of your mighty acts." (Psalm 145:4)

As Christians, memory is central to our faith. Over and over, the scriptures call on us to remember what God has done for us, and we do this every week in the Eucharist by following Christ's command to receive the bread and wine "in remembrance of me." Psalm 145 tells us that we must also pass on these memories to future generations.



The books of the Bible were written for precisely this reason—so that the wondrous things God had done would not be forgotten. In our own day, we "tell of God's mighty acts" by sharing the stories of how God has moved in our lives and our communities.

This year St. Timothy's celebrates its 70th anniversary. The anniversary presents a wonderful opportunity to share the stories of how God's Spirit has been inspiring, comforting, and challenging the people of this parish since 1956. We'll do so both with a grand celebration on October 4 and with the production of a video on "70 Years of Faith."

The video features interviews with a person or family that arrived at St. Timothy's in each decade since the 1950s. As Colleen Krantz and I conducted these interviews with parishioners ranging from founding families to recent newcomers, I found it fascinating to hear what had changed at St. Timothy's over those years and what remained constant. For example, every person we interviewed, from those who have been here since the 1950s to those who arrived in the 2020s, described their first impression of St. Timothy's as a welcoming and friendly church where they were warmly greeted and made to feel at home.

Commending God's works from one generation to the next also requires engaging children and youth in the formation of their faith. I was delighted to have the chance to do that this summer on the Faith and Democracy Pilgrimage. On our trip to Philadelphia and New York, we considered how we pass on memories and communicate our history, not only the history of the church but also that of our country, which is celebrating its own anniversary this year. I was proud of how deeply the youth engaged sometimes challenging questions of faith and history, and you'll have the chance to hear about their pilgrimage experience as well on our Pilgrimage Sunday, October 11.

Memory is essential to our faith not only so we can look back on our past, but so that it can guide our steps forward. As we celebrate 70 years at St. Timothy's, we reflect on all the ways God has been moving in this community. And we look to the future, knowing that God's Spirit is not done with us yet. Through fellowship, formation, and outreach, we will continue to live out the ministry of Jesus Christ in service to all the world.

Program Year Kick-Off and Parish Picnic

Sunday, September 13

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.

70th Anniversary Party

Sunday, October 4

Celebrate seven decades at St. Timothy's with a party on October 4! The liturgy for the service will follow a form like the ones used in the 50's, pictures of the congregation throughout the years will adorn the Parish Hall, and the festivities after the service will feature activities and foods reminiscent of the carnivals that were once a hallmark of our parish life. We will celebrate in thanksgiving for those who founded this congregation and those whose ministry has sustained our community for 70 years.



Faith and Democracy Pilgrimage Sunday

Sunday, October 11

In June, 22 youth pilgrims and adult shepherds traveled to Philadelphia and New York City to explore the history of those cities and the role they played in both the founding of the country and of the Episcopal Church. During our regular Sunday service on October 11, you'll have the chance to hear about what they experienced and where they saw God at work on their pilgrimage!

Blessing of the Animals

**Sunday, October 11 at 4 p.m.
South Lawn of the Church**

All creatures great and small are invited to the annual Blessing of the Animals. You can even bring pictures of your furry friends or your favorite stuffed pals. A short liturgy of thanksgiving will be said followed by special blessings for each pet.

Treats for cats and dogs will be supplied, and we ask that all live critters be leashed, crated, or otherwise contained for safety.



Outreach Ministry Grant

Last October we launched our first ever Outreach Ministry Grant, a grant of \$2,200 to fund new or existing outreach ministries of St. Timothy's. Now it's almost time for Round 2! Priority is given to new projects. Some of our biggest outreach ministries, like the Freestore or the Faith + Grace Garden began with one or two parishioners who saw a need and had an idea to help. We'd love our grant to help get your ideas off the ground! In years that we have no new outreach ministries, the Grant Committee is committed to rotating between existing ministries.

The grant application will be open between October 1-31. For more information about the grant application or to find answers to Frequently Asked Questions, please refer to our webpage at sttimothysiowa.org/outreach-ministry-grant-application/.

Our first annual Outreach Ministry Grant was awarded in November 2025 to the Youth Justice Initiative Study Table. As part of the Youth Justice Initiative, a restorative justice program, St. Timothy's hosts a study table on Thursday nights during the school year. These study tables provide a hot meal and mentoring help for students. Students who attend study table find a supportive community and a safe space to focus on schoolwork.

However, a number of the students' families struggle with food insecurity, especially in the summer when the school lunch program is not operating. YJI used the grant money to care for these students by providing them \$50-\$100 grocery gifts cards in the spring and summer. They were also able to provide some rental assistance to one student's family, who were on the verge of homelessness. We're delighted our grant money was able to fund the YJI Study Table's work of giving students the best chance to succeed!

Excerpts from the grant report:

"The challenges families face due to rising costs continue to place significant strain on our community."

"We helped a family remain housed during a critical time as they prepared for a new baby while caring for their current children. As of the writing of this report, the family remains stably housed."

"Thank you again for your generosity and continued support of Youth Justice Initiative and the youth and families we serve."

- Jen Hahn, YJI Director



Youth Explore Faith and History Through Gaming

This past year and a half, a group of our church youth participated in a creative and immersive storytelling experience that brought the early history of the Church in Britain vividly to life. Using the tabletop role-playing game *Dungeons & Dragons*, students stepped into a narrative set in seventh-century Northumbria, interacting with historical figures and events that shaped what would become the English Church.

For those unfamiliar, *Dungeons & Dragons* is a collaborative storytelling game in which participants create characters and work together to navigate challenges in a narrated world. One person (in this case, Alan Feirer) serves as the Dungeon Master, guiding the story and portraying its setting and characters, while dice determine outcomes in moments of uncertainty. At its best, the game emphasizes teamwork, moral choice, imagination, and character growth.

In this campaign, our youth portrayed fictional companions to real historical figures. These figures included **St. Aidan of Lindisfarne**, the Irish monk who established a monastery on Lindisfarne and devoted himself to preaching, teaching, and caring for the poor, and **St. Hilda of Whitby**, known for her wisdom and leadership in founding monastic communities.

Along the way, fictional challenges such as a Pictish cult and their dragon leader provided symbolic ways to explore fear, division, courage, teamwork, and redemption. The youth also encountered **St. Cuthbert**, remembered as a “healer of the breach,” whose life helped unify the Church after division. And they helped **Eadfrith** gather the materials of ink, gold leaf, and vellum that he would need to create the famous **Lindisfarne Gospels**.

Several of these historical figures are commemorated in Lesser Feasts and Fasts, our Episcopal Church’s calendar. Aidan, Hilda, and Cuthbert are remembered for their evangelism and leadership, while their stories—and that of Eadfrith—were preserved by **the Venerable Bede** in the early eighth century.

Through this experience, our youth saw how faith is not only personal but deeply historical and communal. They practiced collaboration, wrestled with meaningful decisions, and experienced how acts of mercy, courage, and perseverance shape both stories and communities.

We are grateful for their creativity, curiosity, fun spirits, appetite for pepperoni pizza and willingness to engage so deeply with history, faith, and each other.

The next campaign will begin September 20 and will be open to all youth ages 12 and up.

