

THE TIMOTHIAN

NEWSLETTER for ST. TIMOTHY EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN CHURCH of GRAND ISLAND

1453 Staley Road, Grand Island, NY 14072

Our Pastor: The Rev. Adam Arends

Our website: www.sttimothygrandisland.com

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Our phone number: 716-773-4400

Our Child Care Center:

716-773-9249

Meeting Needs with



December, 2025

Great things are happening at St. Timothy's! Here's what's inside:

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From the Pastor's Desk

Happy New Year!

Yes, you read that correctly. The Christian liturgical year begins with Advent, a time of preparation, of getting ready for Christ, and of waiting. How does your understanding of December change if you view it as the start of the year, as opposed to the end of the year?

The season of Advent is not what we expect, if we are paying attention to how television, marketing, and our culture talk about December. In popular culture in the US, December is all about getting ready for Christmas and buying presents. Yet in the church, Advent is about getting ready for Jesus to come into the world as a baby, but also preparing our selves for Jesus' return and Christ's presence with us now. What if we used December not as a time to get ready for presents, but as a time to get our hearts re-oriented to Christ for another year?

The new year starts for Christians on the first Sunday in Advent, November 30th. As you prepare for celebrations with family and friends, this year, let's also prepare ourselves for Christ's return. Not just as a baby 2000 years ago, but also in our neighbors today. I pray that we see in the newborns born this month, the face of Christ. I pray that in our new neighbors we meet from near and far we see the face of Jesus, who travelled all the way to Egypt and back to escape the tyranny of a leader who wanted to retain power at all costs. May we see in our neighbors a gift worthy of honoring, as precious as any perfume, spice, or gold. May we be reminded this new year, that Christ has come, Christ will come again, and Christ is here with us now, Emmanuel. Happy New Year, Blessed Advent, and Merry Christmas.

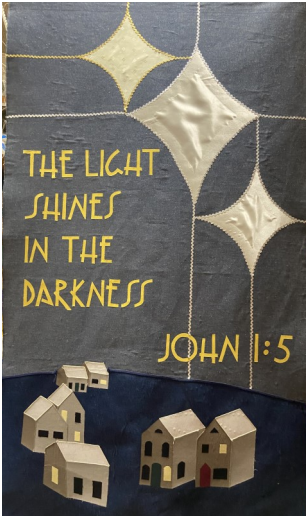
In Awe of Amazing Grace,
Pastor Adam



*What if we used December
not as a time to get ready
for presents, but as a time to
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Altar Guild Notes: December, 2025

The circle of life. There it is, up front in the sanctuary. The advent wreath. The brass ring it rests on is an eternal circle. The circle is wrapped in never changing evergreens, adorned with a swath of Advent blue ribbon. Once again it challenges the increasing darkness of the world with an additional candle lit each week.



The first blue candle lit is the Prophecy candle, Hope. The second blue candle is the Bethlehem candle, Peace. The third pink candle is the Shepherd's candle, Joy. The last blue candle is the Angel's candle, Love.



The word advent means "coming," an expectation of arrival of event or person. Time to prepare our hearts, church, and homes! Hard not to notice the decorations added each week in our church, our homes, & neighborhood in anticipation! As we clean and dust our homes, we also sweep hate, doubt, fear from our hearts.

Hope, Peace, Joy, Love. What's next? Christmas Eve!!

The blue paraments are replaced with white. Poinsettias are everywhere.

Look to the center of the Advent wreath.... A White candle is aflame!

Jesus has come as humble baby in a manger of straw. Jesus Christ, the true Light of the World. Now is the time to welcome! Welcome Christ into the center of our hearts, home, our daily life.

The last Sunday is the first Sunday of Christmas. What joy has filled our hearts! Christ has come, Christ will come again! Our voices join the ringing organ with hymns of Christmas. The embroidered Christmas paraments tell the story. Hope, Peace, Joy, Love come to fruition in the form of our divine infant King. Praise God.

Keep Jesus in your heart.

Your sister in Christ,

Deborah



A Message From the Co-President

Hi.

We are in the holiday season. Let us give thanks to God for all we have been given. Remember this time may not be as bright and cheerful for everyone. Every person's situation is different, so be mindful and help spread some cheer especially for those who are in need.

Around the church this month, we got part of the flat roof repaired that was leaking a little. This was just in time so we could replace some ceiling tiles with water spots in preparation for the ecumenical service and Breakfast with Santa. New and brighter lights were installed in the church. This involved a number of people who pitched in with equipment and helped. Unfortunately Duane had a little accident after changing bulb four. He is recovering but will be off his feet for quite a while. From what I heard from several people, they are much happier with the brighter lights. We've had some new shades installed in the church thanks to a generous donor. The shades will help keep our new carpet from fading. We are still getting used to how the shades work and having them adjusted a little bit. The ladies room has a new battery-powered paper towel dispenser installed. Thanks to everyone who made this all happen. I would like to also thank the finance committee, property committee, and the council who behind the scenes make sure that our building upkeep is prioritized and to our congregation and child care center for their generous support.

We heard our choir for the first time this fall under the new leadership of Tim. I thought they sounded wonderful and look forward to hearing more.

We had a very enthusiastic presentation on a youth trip to El Salvador by Ronan. It was interesting to hear how they managed to communicate without speaking the language. Some things like kids playing football and soccer, and food, don't need much for translation. It sounds like a trip where he built a fence was a success and he's looking forward to his next trip during winter break. It is great to see our youth helping others and especially seeing how other people live with limited resources and they're still happy. I know during some of my travels to other parts of the world that aren't as prosperous as ours it does open your eyes to how well we have it here in the US. I think it also makes you look at things and possessions differently than you would if you haven't seen some of the impoverished areas in other countries. It is great for everyone especially the youth to see and experience this first hand. Ronan could always use a little monetary support for his upcoming trip, most of which goes towards the work done there.

The ecumenical service was very enjoyable as always. And it's nice to see members of the community come together and worship together. As always the community chorus made our evening even more enjoyable. Then to top it off after the ecumenical service we had a dessert smorgasbord. I would like to thank everybody who baked, set up, decorated, did dishes, put away tables and chairs, polished silver, bought supplies, served, and all the little things that make this a beautiful community event. The money we collected went to the Grand Island Neighbors Foundation to purchase turkeys for those in need on Grand Island. Thank you all

so very much for helping those in our community who need some assistance during this season. Every little bit helps.

Looking forward to next month:

Each year we do the ELCA Good Gifts tree for Advent and Christmas where you can purchase items to address three basic needs: food, health, and education. You can purchase chickens, pigs, goats, etc. to help an impoverished family with food security. You can also purchase vaccines, water filters, latrines, and school supplies to help bring sanitation and education to these areas where people can't afford those supplies. This need is more critical now than it has been in the past as some of the more affluent countries have cut or reduced funding to some of these third world countries. Please help as you can to provide food and medicine as more people are in need.

We have the pancake breakfast with Santa. Again we're looking for volunteers to make pancakes and sausage, serve, and set up to help our child care center. Please see Tracy or Athena who are selling tickets before church or contact the office to see where you can help. We are still looking for some instant pancake mix where you just add water and some fully cooked breakfast sausage links. Hopefully many of you will purchase tickets and enjoy a breakfast together and meet some of the child care teachers who are always there working.

The Christmas pageant is also fast approaching. It always puts a smile on my face.

Don't forget to order your poinsettias to make our church and your house look festive for the season of Christ's birth. The past few years the flowers from Rudolph Galley & Sons have been beautiful.

Remember to take some silent time and de-stress during what can be a busy and rushed time of year.

Regards,
Paul Yaeger



Child Care Center News for December 2025!

Hello, Church Family!

I hope everyone was able to enjoy a wonderful Thanksgiving with their loved ones! We truly have so much to be grateful for! As we step into December, our Child Care Center is filled with the excitement and warmth that this special season brings. Throughout the month, our classrooms will be celebrating the spirit of the season with festive activities designed to spark joy and learning. Our teachers will take part in our annual Holiday Door Decorating, bringing creativity and cheer to our hallways. Our children will have opportunities to learn about different winter holidays, helping them appreciate the many ways families celebrate during this time of year.

Our Child Care Center is excited to share all that's happening this December as we celebrate the season with joy, community, and gratitude. We are especially looking forward to our annual Breakfast with Santa on Saturday, December 13th, a cherished tradition that brings our church family and local community together each year. This festive morning includes two breakfast seatings at 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM, with a heartwarming children's sing-a-long at 10:30 AM led by our little ones. The event not only creates special memories for families but also supports the important work of our center. To help make the morning run smoothly, we are still seeking volunteers to assist with setup, serving, crafts, and cleanup, and we are gratefully accepting donations of pancake mix from anyone who feels called to give. Tickets will be sold every Sunday before church leading up to the event, and we encourage everyone to invite friends, neighbors, and extended family to join in the fun. Tickets are \$12 for adults, \$8 for children 3 and up, and 2 and under are free. We are deeply thankful for the ongoing love and support from our church community, and we look forward to celebrating this blessed season together.

Thank you!

Athena Torain
Center Director



Worship Information



Worship continues at 9:30 AM each Sunday. All are welcome! You can also watch us on our livestream at www.sttimothygrandisland.com. Sunday School for age 3 through 4th grade is held during the 9:30 AM service. Our Christmas Eve service will be held at 4 PM. We hope you can join us!

News and Upcoming Events

Christmas Services

On Sunday, December 21st, we'll hold our annual Christmas Play, "Once Upon A Manger." We welcome participation from kids and adults alike for this fun rendition of the Christmas story!

Our family-friendly Christmas Eve candlelight service will be held at 4 PM on December 24th, and on Sunday, December 28th, we'll continue the celebration of Christmas with a lessons and carols service. All are welcome!

Poinsettia orders



Poinsettia orders are being placed once again this year to grace our sanctuary on Christmas Eve, and the flowers can be taken home after the service to enjoy. Choices are red, white, and pink blooms and are \$11 each again this year. The greenhouse will accept orders through December 8th; please fill out the bulletin form or contact the office to place your order. Each plant can be designated in memory or honor of someone, or this commemoration can be done with a donation to ELCA World Hunger in lieu of poinsettias. Thank you!

Winter Weather Closure Information

In the event of unsafe winter weather, please check your email, Channel 2, or Channel 7 for our closure notices. Services will be held via Zoom or livestream on YouTube instead.

Handel's Messiah

The Buffalo Philharmonic Chorus will present Handel's Messiah on Sunday, November 30th at 7:30 PM at Our Lady of Victory National Shrine and Basilica and again on Sunday, December 6th at 7:30 PM at St. Joseph University Parish. Visit www.bpchorus.org for tickets.

Stay Safe Online - Free Course

Husky Logic is offering a free webinar empowering seniors to stay safe online from digital and phone scams—knowledge is your best shield. This will be held on December 6th at 1 PM. Register to receive the link at www.HuskyLogic.com/webinar.

Stella Niagara Center of Renewal Retreats

For upcoming program and retreat offerings, visit <https://www.stellaniagararetreats.org/Retreats>.

In Loving Memory

We mourn the loss of our beloved sister, Joan Buchanan, but we are at peace knowing she has entered God's eternal care. Thank you for all the love and care you shared through the years and for your support of her family during this time.



Missions

WELCA Thankofferings

\$435 was collected in Thankofferings for the Women of the ELCA ministries. Thank you for your generous support.

Thanksgiving Ecumenical Service Collection

\$939 was collected for the Grand Island Neighbors Foundation at our Thanksgiving Ecumenical Service and at worship that morning to help them purchase turkeys in bulk. These will be handed out to those in need of food assistance on Grand Island in mid December. Thank you for your generosity and support of our neighbors.



Breakfast with Santa

Our Child Care Center's Breakfast with Santa fundraiser is coming up on Saturday, December 13th! From a hot pancake breakfast, a holiday sing-along, and photo ops with Santa to a basket raffle, crafts, and decorations, it's a great family event! Seatings are 9-10 and 11-12. Tickets can be purchased before services or through the child care office; adult tickets are \$12, kids' tickets ages 3-12 are \$8, and kids 2 and under eat free. Donations of fully-cooked breakfast sausage and add-water-only instant pancake mix are appreciated, along with volunteers. Kitchen help can arrive 7:30-8 AM and other volunteers between 8 and 8:30; we'll finish by 12:30.



ELCA Good Gifts ornaments

Starting in December, you'll find an Advent tree with ELCA Good Gifts ornaments on it. These can be meaningful Christmas gifts or given from the heart in response to the spirit of the season. Among the options are livestock to help a family with food security and economic wellbeing, water filters and school supplies to improve lives, vaccines for children to protect against deadly illnesses, and meals at a soup kitchen. To find out more about each gift and how they help lift families and communities out of poverty through Christ's love, check out <https://goodgifts.elca.org>. Offerings can be designated as the label on the chosen ornament and placed in the offering basket or put in the church office. You can keep the ornament or turn it in blank for use in future years.

ELCA
GOOD
GIFTS



Women of the ELCA Conference Report

This is my report of the Upstate New York Synod 2025 Convention.

We met at Notre Dame Retreat Center, Canandaigua, NY. The theme for the Convention was "The Path to Peace and Healing." Each day, there were 40 women present. Myrna Wells Ulland, Executive Board President, Women of the ELCA, was our Keynote Speaker. Our Chaplain was Pastor Aileen Robbins, who lives in Rochester and is serving two congregations, St. Paul's, Penn Yan and Messiah, Rochester. Both were well informed about WELCA and shared their information.

One area discussed was that a short-term appeal has been launched to close last year's \$250,000 funding gap. We are encouraged to "SALT" our offering between now and Jan 3, 2026. "Salt" is "Share Abundance, Love, and Thanks."

"The Path to Peace and Healing" was the theme for the weekend. We learned about how the women from Indigenous Communities have gone missing or been murdered without any resolution to their cases in New York as well as other states.

Saturday morning some of us met outside for Morning Prayer. While facing the rising sun, we used the Cherokee Morning Song to welcome the New Day. "Awen" (I am) "De" (of) "Yauh" (the Great Spirit) "HO" (it is so). During Sunday worship, we used a Native American version of the Twenty-Third Psalm.

On Saturday afternoon, a group of us took a side trip to Ganondagan State Historic Site. We enjoyed seeing the "Full-size" Seneca Bark Longhouse built in 1998. We also explored the grounds.

We had time each day to socialize with each other. There were crafts we could do, including puzzles. Also we had time for singing and just visiting.

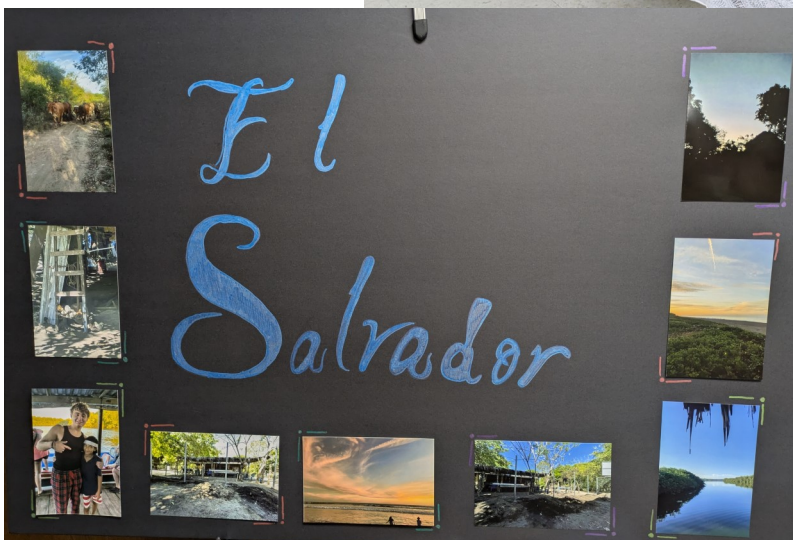
On Sunday morning, we had a closing worship service. I did not attend any of the Business Meetings.

Nancy Morth

Last Month's Memories



From a meaningful All Saints service to the beautiful work of our Altar Guild and an enjoyable Thanksgiving Ecumenical Service and Dessert Smorgasbord, we had a lot to be grateful for last month!



Ronan Cummings presented on his missions trip to El Salvador and how excited he is to return next year to continue helping out and being transformed by the relationships built and lessons learned. If you'd like to help fund next year's work, checks can be made payable to YoungLife.

Prayer Chain



Here at St. Timothy, we believe that prayer is powerful and can be incredibly helpful in our lives and in the lives of others. Our prayer chain allows you to ask others in our church community to pray for your friends and loved ones in their times of need.

If you would like to add someone to the prayer chain, you can call us at 773-4400, email us at communications@sttimothygrandisland@gmail.com, or contact Pastor Adam. You can also fill out the prayer chain request sheet in the Narthex at the table next to the Sanctuary entrance. Please include an address where we can send cards to those in our prayers.

We hold the following people in our prayers: the family of Joan Buchanan; Frank; Kalene Best; Marge Skinner; Charris Kiener; Paul Schwandt; Adelaide Benninger & family; Terri; Michael Briggs; Rob Cornelius; Phyllis Hall; Rick Burns; Mike Seguin; Matt Rowe; Esmaeil & Fariba; Dana; Judy Nutz; Jerry & Sharon; Eliana & Lilly; Jay; Dan; Michelle Ramsey; Mike & Tina Cutini; Diane & Brian Lind; Aiden Haynes; Vanessa; Logan McKenzie; Karen Wiswall; Ronald Olson; Janet Upham; Deborah Piotrowski; Mike Gueli; Lynda Reeves; Josh; Myles; Alex; Kathy Wright; Colin; Gary; Brenda; Margaret Miller; Marlene; Randy; Betty; Riley; Joe Morley; Richard E; Edna; Gloria; Marianne Carroll; Danny Penque; Robin Bengaglio Richard; Joanne M.; Sylvia & Joe Smith; Lorraine Pfohl; and Cheryl Rosati.

Please note that we no longer remove people unless we have heard of their improvement or their passing. Updates are always appreciated and can be directed to the office by paper note, email, or phone (communications@sttimothygrandisland.com, 716-773-4400). Thank you.



Pastoral Care

Pastoral Care is an important resource available at St. Timothy's. To contact Pastor Adam for pastoral care needs, you can reach him at pastor@sttimothygrandisland.com or at 716-773-4400.

The following are some situations in which you should call:

- ◇ In the event of a hospitalization or placement in another health care facility.
- ◇ In emergency situations of injury or illness, even if there is no hospital admission. People are often sent home under difficult circumstances.
- ◇ In times of personal crisis or struggle in which you may benefit from direct pastoral care.
- ◇ When in need of pastoral services such as baptisms, weddings, home communion, funeral, or memorial services.
- ◇ In any other circumstance where pastoral care may benefit you. When in doubt, call.

December 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 Worship, 9:30 AM	8	9	10	11 Finance meeting, 9 AM	12	13 Breakfast With Santa! 9 & 11 AM
14 Worship, 9:30 AM	15	16	17 	18 Council meeting, 5:30 PM	19	20
21 Worship, 9:30 AM Christmas Play!	22	23	24 Christmas Eve Service, 4 PM	25	26	27
28 Worship, 9:30 AM	29	30	31			