



# THE TIMOTHIAN

ST. TIMOTHY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH (ELCA)

December 2009

*“Called, gathered, enlightened and made holy by God, we strive to live out the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Through worship, education, prayer, study, outreach and our Child Care Center, we share the love of Jesus Christ with all people.”*

## Address

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## Website

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## Pastor

Rev. Dean M. Hunneshagen  
Home phone No. 662-6037  
Cell phone No. 440-7739

## Director of Music

Peter Gates

## Office Hours

Monday-Thursday 9am-1pm

## Office Secretary

Adrienne Neutz

## Sunday Worship

Holy Communion  
8:00 am  
10:30 am

## St. Timothy Child Care Center

Phone 716-773-9249

## Director

Lydia Shiposki

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

“Your finest days are ahead of you.” We have all heard that said at some time or other. We want to believe that that will be true.

I happen to believe St. Timothy’s finest days are ahead. It is not that former days were bad. It is just that the future days can be finer. I don’t know that because I am clairvoyant. I know that as a matter of faith. I know that God works things more marvelous than we can imagine. I know that he works miracles every day. I know that God has so much more in store for us than we can imagine.

One of my favorite accounts along these lines is the story of Abraham. It goes like this:

“By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance; and he set out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he stayed for a time in the land he had been promised, as in a foreign land, living in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. By faith he received power of procreation, even though he was too old—and Sarah herself was barren—because he considered him faithful who had promised. Therefore from one person, and this one as good as dead, descendants were born, ‘as many as the stars of heaven and as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.’” (Hebrews 11:8-12)

The very essence of the Advent and Epiphany season is that God comes powerfully into our world still today. We can expect His coming afresh into the life and ministry of St. Timothy. When we allow Him to break us and rebuild us into a new and renewed force for Him, our finest days are ahead of us.

Our finest days are ahead of us. This I believe. This I hope. This I trust to come.

With affection,

Pastor Dean



## Advent Schedule

*There will be an Advent service on Wednesday, December 2, 9 and 16 at 7:00pm.*

*We will use the Holden Evening Prayer with Bible Reflection led by Pastor Dean. Please join us!*



There will be two services on Christmas Eve.

4:00 PM – Family Service

11:00 PM - Candle light Service

**There will be no service on Christmas Day.**



During this season of Thanksgiving, we wish to thank everyone for their Thankoffering gifts. We received over \$500.00. Again, it is the small contribution of many that makes the amount significant. Also, thank you to all who participated in our "Shoe gifts" for The Lutheran Church Home. Sixty gifts were prepared and will be distributed to the residents on St. Nichols Eve. The gifts may not seem like much, but they do help the residents to know that someone cares about them.

Submitted by Nancy Morth

## Defensive Driving Course



A defensive driving course will be held on January 16 and January 23 beginning at 8:30 am and ending at 12:30 pm. Any age driver is accepted. Call Terri Glassman at 694-7342 for reservations.

## Women's Christmas Party

All women of St. Timothy are invited to share in a pre-Christmas holiday party which will take place on Monday, December 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm in the fellowship hall. Please bring an appetizer, light dish for our main meal. We will also have a \$5.00 gift exchange.

If you are able to join us, please sign up in the Narthex on the sheet posted on the bulletin board.

Hope to see all of our ladies and enjoy the start of our holiday season.

Submitted by,  
Elaine Hardman



Our heartfelt thanks to the many friends of St. Timothy who sent cards and held Lisa and our family in prayer during Lisa's illness and now during our time of healing.

The Doebert family.



The Stewardship Committee has announced that the annual Fall Pledge Drive is being moved to Spring of 2010. We request all contributors to extend their current commitments into the next year.



A great big "thank you" to eight of our Jr./Sr. youth group members for making such an awesome dinner for the "21 Days of Renewal" a few weeks ago. We are so blessed to have such wonderful kids! Thank you for supporting them with your eBay and bottle/can donations!



**21 Days of Renewal** has completed nine sessions and will resume Wednesday, January 6. The theme for January will be Christian Stewardship and the discipline of giving. Our average attendance has been 41. New enrollees are being sought. People both within the parish and from outside are welcome. Call the church office to enroll.



It is Advent, a time of hope amid crisis. Simple blue paraments and wall banner continue to greet us in our worship space. The Advent wreath is a light in deep darkness. Each candle lit brings a growing sense of expectation. Then our space is softened with green trees, wreath and garland. Finally white lights and chrismons adorn the tree to complete the scene as we wait for the Son to light the darkness.

When we arrive for Christmas service our surroundings remind us again of the story of Jesus birth. White is the liturgical color for Christmas. It symbolizes the purity of Christ and our great joy at His coming. The hand embroidered Christmas paraments are used to decorate the altar, lectern and pulpit. They won't be up for long, as Christmas is a very short season that only extends through the two following Sundays. Take some time after service for your family to take a close look at these paraments. It is fun to check out the different stitches used to create these scenes.

The red of the poinsettias remind us that this is a major festival of the church year. The bright light of many candles complete the look of Hope made manifest in Jesus' birth. P.S. Come for Wednesday evening Holden service this month. Experience Mary's joy as we sing the Magnificat!

## “A LITANY OF THANKSGIVING”

Give thanks to the Lord who is good.  
**God’s love is everlasting.**

Come let us praise God joyfully.  
**Let us come to God with thanksgiving.**

For the good world; for things great and small, beautiful and awesome; for seen and unseen splendors;  
**Thank you, God.**

For human life; for talking and moving and thinking together; for common hopes and hardships shared from birth until our dying;  
**Thank you, God.**

For work to do and strength to work; for comradeship of labor; for exchanges of good humor and encouragement;  
**Thank you, God.**

For marriage, for the mystery and joy of flesh made one; for mutual forgiveness and burdens shared; for secrets kept in love;  
**Thank you, God.**

For family; for living together and eating together; for family amusements and family pleasures;  
**Thank you, God.**

For children; for their energy and curiosity; for their brave play and startling frankness; for their sudden sympathies;  
**Thank you, God**

For growing up and growing old; for wisdom deepened by experience; for rest in leisure; and for time made precious by its passing;  
**Thank you, God.**

For your help in times of doubt and sorrow; for healing our diseases; for preserving us in temptation and danger;  
**Thank you, God.**

For the church into which we have been called; for the good news we receive by Word and Sacrament; for our life together in the Lord;  
**We praise you, God.**

For your Holy Spirit, who guides our steps and brings us gifts of faith and love; for your Spirit who prays in us and prompts our grateful worship;  
**We praise you, God.**

Above all, O God, for your Son Jesus Christ, who lived and died and lives again for our salvation; for our hope in him; and for the joy of serving him;  
**We thank you and praise you, Eternal God, for all your goodness to us.**

Give thanks to the Lord, who is good.  
**God’s love is everlasting.**

*PCUSA Book of Common Worship, p792  
Island Presbyterian Church  
The Reverend Nader Awad, Pastor*

*The Grand Island Community Thanksgiving Service hosted by St. Timothy on Sunday evening, November 22 was a very rich experience. The music, message and fellowship was superb. Over 100 attended. The Neighbor's Foundation of Grand Island received \$394 from the offering along with some canned goods. The women of St. Timothy provided a splendid dessert buffet. Following is the message delivered by Pastor Hunneshagen. Printed elsewhere is the particularly poignant Litany of Thanksgiving submitted by Pastor Nader Awad of Island Presbyterian Church from their hymn book.*

“Ageless Advice”  
by  
Pastor Dean M. Hunneshagen

Text: Deuteronomy 26:1-19 and Matthew 6:25-43

On the occasion of a National Day of Thanksgiving, some “ageless advice.”

We call it a “day of thanksgiving.” We might well call it a “day of gratitude.”  
Gratitude is at the heart of any thanks-giving.

We call it a “national” day of Thanksgiving. That is note-worthy. It gives all faith communities in our land, and those outside of faith communities, the encouragement to dig deep, latch on to any deep seated gratitude that may be within and to give thanks. That would be a healthy thing to do...for ourselves and for our nation.

As an American day of gratitude, I would like to share with you some “advice” (it may be better called “instruction”) from another time and location. I call it “ageless” because the advice is surely timeless and appropriate for any time or circumstance that merits giving thanks, expressing gratitude.

There are six pieces of “advice” for incorporation in these moments: five from the mouth of Moses and one from the mouth of Jesus.

The six are:

1. give an offering
2. claim your geography
3. acknowledge your roots
4. celebrate with joy your good fortune
5. care for those who are without
6. don't worry so much

1. Give an offering. It is hard to be grateful when you are feeling stingy. Gratitude spawns generosity, not stinginess. Moses' instruction was to take a portion of your harvest to the place of worship and offer it to the Lord. In fact, it was to be from the “first fruit” of the harvest. Right off the top, before anything else.

There is a tendency to cling to what we have as though it were “mine.” It is not yours. It belongs to the one from whom it comes. So get over it. Release your grip and out of gratitude give an offering!

2. Claim your geography as God-given. So often we humans want to invoke a “geographical solution.” If only we were elsewhere, life would be better, our aspirations

could be achieved, our problems diminished. Moses instructed his people that the moment they stepped into the land where they were to settle, they were to declare: “This is the land the Lord our God gave us. A land of milk and honey.” I don’t know if you have ever seen “the promised land”; but it doesn’t all look like a land of milk and honey. Yet it was to be regarded as such; and, more importantly, as having been where they had been placed by the Lord.

The sense of “this is it.” “It is from the Lord” can have a profound effect upon how much one feels satisfied...and grateful.

3. Acknowledge your roots. God’s hand has been present in everything you have become. Moses had the people recite repeatedly the history of their journey...of how they got to where they had gotten. Only by God’s hand had they arrived! There was a God-focus in their being. They were who they were because of God.

It is no different for you and me. Were it not for God, we would be nowhere. Gratitude from which thanksgiving comes is rooted in God’s mighty hand of deliverance. If we forget that, we are doomed as a nation and as individuals.

4. Celebrate with joy your good fortune. Gladness is a key ingredient of gratitude. The mood is upbeat. The joy is deep. Moses said the whole community should celebrate with joy the harvest that God has made possible.

Gratitude begs to be given expression in joyful celebration.

5. Care for those who are without. Moses instructed that a generous portion of one’s good fortune was to be given for the care of those who were without resources: the un-landed priestly tribe, the widows and orphans, even the aliens in the land. No one was to be neglected! A culture of care, of mutual care, must prevail. Genuine gratitude dictated that this be done.

In tending to the needs of others, generosity, born of a generous spirit, is to be the standard. Tight-fisted, begrudging, resentful giving is not a mark of a grateful heart.

6. Don’t worry so much. Everybody is concerned about having enough . There is always the fear of not having what is necessary. Yet, Jesus warns about that attitude. “Is worry the proper focus,” he asks? “Shouldn’t you trust the heavenly father more?”

God’s provision is often more than we need. At the very least it is enough in almost all cases. Worry harbors within it dissatisfaction. It harbors the thought that what may be enough is not enough. The antidote: be grateful for what you have instead of always worrying that what you have won’t be enough.

We call this event tonight a “**Grand Island** Community Thanksgiving Service.” The message, as well as the event, has as its first application Grand Island.

So how does the “Island” stack up in relationship to the six points?

Far be it for me, a relative newcomer to the island and certainly one who is viewed as an outsider, to say very much on this score. But some things are pretty apparent:

1. Grand Island, through its churches encourages “giving a gift.” The emphasis upon first fruits giving is pretty standard, I would guess.
2. True Grand Islanders very much claim this land as the place they want to be and as theirs. Never-mind thinking of leaving and going somewhere else. This is it!
3. Grand Island acknowledging their roots, acknowledging that God has placed us here with a purpose...this I am not so sure about. Certainly, Grand Island looks fairly “religious.” There is an ample number of churches that are visible. Maybe even some not so visible ones. But appearing religious is not the same thing as being deeply rooted in the Deliverer.
4. Having joy? I would guess that one is fairly strong. Given the tone of this evening’s event...the sound of music and friendship, you seem to know how to celebrate with joy.
5. Grand Island being postured to care for those without? If the Neighbor’s Foundation is any indication, maybe we are. I suspect the greater caring for the needy actually is embedded in each of our church communities. On the other hand, there is an isolation spirit afoot here, fueled by a conspiracy of silence that may be hiding the deeper needs of our community. Hence, caring for those without may not be as strong as we care to think.
6. As for worry, are Grand Islanders a worrying group? You tell me. How do we rate? Probably fairly average in that score.

Nevertheless, we are here! We are grateful. We feel it and want to say it. So, for the moment, we will set aside all worry. We will rejoice in the Lord’s bounty and give a gift to help those who are without. We will acknowledge that this Island is a good place to be. But best of all, we will thank God for being our God, for his redeeming love in Christ Jesus, and the hope with which we live day by day because he is in our lives and in our community.