

THE TIMOTHIAN

NEWSLETTER for ST. TIMOTHY EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN CHURCH of GRAND ISLAND

1453 Staley Road, Grand Island, NY 14072

Our Pastor: Kris Bjerke-Ulliman

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Our Vision:

*Christ Being the Cornerstone of
Grand Island*

Our Mission:

Sending Forth Disciples of Christ



July, 2020

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

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From the Pastor's Home Study

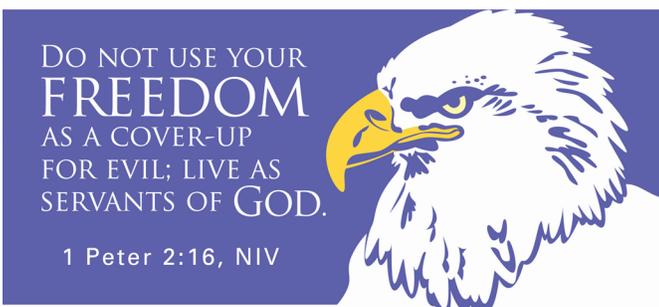
“Give me that Good news”

(Inspired by Pastor Miranda Hammer's message at St Timothy Lutheran Church on June 21, 2020)

For centuries, the Church has praised and shouted about the Good News of Jesus, so what is this good news? Does “good news” depend on your day? For most, good news is based on your personal situation, circumstance, or experience. If you are Lutheran and/or feeling religious, you might just say, the good news is “we are saved by grace through faith.” Wonderful in its day, but how does it speak to us in the 21st century?

A majority of Americans believe good news is revealed in what they experience with their five senses. This is a materialistic perspective. This understanding leads to a deep devotion to consumerism. Loyalty to consumeristic consumption of goods and services gives a sense of control and ability to elevate one's place in society simply by comparison.

It is good news that, “we are saved by grace through faith,” and through our faith in Christ's death and life-giving resurrection, we will be saved from eternal death. Is this gracious, underserved gift of God the extent of our faith? Containing our faith within this parameter is very popular. For many, this is the best of all worlds. As the materialistic perspective flourishes without any restrictions, we feel energized, courageous, and victorious as we have created our own realm of influence and control in state and federal government, economy, and the media.



A materialist perspective, while supported and propagated by our culture, runs counter to Jesus' teaching. Its empty rhetoric has filled people's bellies while they starve. Materialism offers no lasting joy, peace, or love. Self-worth is based on what one has

or does, and not on a sense of simply being. Even our white skin color raises our worth, offers security, and enhances our relationships in our community. As we enjoy our privileges, we may ask ourselves, “why are black, brown, and Asian Americans so angry, frustrated, and prone to acts of violence and protest?”

I believe the teachings of God have been relegated to the sidelines for most Christians. We have forgotten that we are children of God - all colors and creeds! (Genesis 1:27-28). Created in the image of God, we have limitless worth and sacred value. Even the U.S. Declaration of Independence **says** this: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created **equal**, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." When this was written, the authors directed these words of equality to white males only.

Two hundred years later, we have seen that women and people of color also must have unalienable rights - life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Can we live in a country where God's Kingdom Reigns within our democracy?

Jesus teaches us about our citizenship in God's Kingdom where we are called to "love one another, pray for one another, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and visit those in prison." He teaches us about creating a loving relationship with God, ourselves, and our neighbors. His teachings are not a list of rules, but rather an invitation to actualize life-sharing relationships where all are welcome and blessed.

This path will change your life, and may altar your current understanding of the world. So you have a choice - stay with the status quo of American Christianity or dive into the present Kingdom of God now.

Pastor Kris Bjerke-Ulliman



Interested in conversation on this article? Set up an appointment through the church office to meet with Pastor Kris.

Notes from the Altar Guild: July, 2020

Time after Pentecost. The long green season. Really long. Really green.



We are citizens of a new creation! Jesus has ascended to the Father. The Holy Spirit sent to be with us. We celebrate the Triune God. This is a lot!! We need this time to take it all in! We are redeemed!

The Sunday Gospels will reveal lesson after lesson on how to live in this new “saved” creation. There is a hum of excitement as we are also learning how to live during a pandemic, emerging from our isolation to be in social environments once more. Gospels written so long ago still resonate today. Love one another as Jesus loves us. Wearing a mask, social distance, and sanitized hands are acts of loving others. So many stories of sacrifice and helping are signs of Jesus in us.

The liturgical year is a spiritual reality in every age. The familiar cycle leads to familiar words. The familiar Word gets imprinted on our hearts. Jesus in us. Let this connection blossom. We will see green inside the sanctuary again.

There are so many shades of green around us in the meantime. God has the best crayons!

Find strength in our community of faith. Take part in an opportunity for worship outside or on Zoom. Keep your Bible or devotion book in sight. It’s mere presence is a source of peace. Find time for prayer and quiet meditation.

Be in peace. Christ is with you.

Your sister in Christ,
Deborah

God's LOVE has
been poured
into our
HEARTS
through
the
HOLY SPIRIT
that has been
given to us.

An illustration featuring a stylized heart shape on the right side, with several wavy lines in shades of green and blue flowing downwards and to the left from the heart.

Romans 5:5, NRSV

A Note From the President

Dear St. Timothy parishioners,

Four months ago, we were worshipping together in church. Youth were meeting between services, children were learning in their Sunday School classrooms, adults were engaged in Bible study and mission work inside and outside of our church walls, creating excitement. Covid-19 has touched each and every one of our lives in some way. Now, our community is starting to open up and we need to be diligent in our thoughts and actions. Your Church Board along with Pastor Kris, know it's not just about opening up our building, it is about creating a safe space to worship. We realize some people still won't feel safe, so we must find ways to keep them included and care for them with patience and understanding.

This month is one of transition. Pastor Kris has been doing our church services via Zoom on Sunday mornings for the past three months. On Sundays beginning in July, we will be having an outdoor parking lot service (with masks, your own chairs, and social distancing), as well as one online service for those who prefer to stay home. With Zoom, you can use your computer or dial in to hear the service by phone. (Details are on our website or you call the church office.) Please join us for whatever service suits your needs best.



Outdoor Service

As we move forward into the unknown Covid-19 future, church as we know it may never be the same. But God loves us unconditionally and I can't wait to see the amazing possibilities He has planned for us! Thank you all for being a special part of our St. Timothy's church family.

In peace,

Karen Rose

News and updates from the Child Care Center

Welcome to Summer!

The childcare center is excited to welcome several families back to the building for our summer program. We have fun-filled activities planned for all age groups! Although we had to postpone Vacation Bible School to the public, we will still have it for the classroom the first week of August!! We would like to thank the church members who have made our outdoor space amazing this year! The flowers and the lawn look amazing!!!



One of our feature activities is Fun Friday. The children can bring their bikes, skateboards, roller blades, or scooters and the parking lot will be blocked off so the children can ride in a big space. We are also featuring our summer reading program "Pages for Popsicles" where children can earn a popsicle treat for reading throughout the week. All ages will be participating!

We are grateful for the many blessings we have here at St. Tim's, and the amazing collaboration between the church and the school!

Joelle Waters, Child Care Center Director

Online Giving

We humbly ask you to continue your faithful spiritual practice of giving while we are unable to meet in person. This can be done through Give Plus or Tithe.ly online, or by mailing in your support.

Give Plus and Tithe.ly both allow you to make one-time or recurring donations and to choose to give from either your checking account or credit card. The links to both websites can be found on the [Stewardship](#) page of our website, as well as on the home page.

Thank you for helping us continue our mission through these tough times. We are truly grateful for your support.



From The Community

COVID19 and my walk with the Lord

KJV 2 Corinthians 5:7 “walk by Faith, not by Sight”

In early March 2020, I developed a case of Bronchitis. This left me in a precarious position as we were in the early stages of the Coronavirus Pandemic.

I started to take precautions such as wearing a mask, continuously washing my hands, trying not to touch my face and practicing what we now refer to as social distancing.

Unfortunately, I tested positive for the COVID19 at a local hospital on 4/15/2020 after being sick at home for four days. I do not know how or where I contracted the disease, but because I had recently been treated for bronchitis, I was in a vulnerable position and the virus attacked my lungs in an aggressive manner.

Prior to being diagnosed with COVID19, I was in very good health, physically fit, and did not suffer from any other underlying medical conditions other than the bout of bronchitis.

After returning home from the hospital, the virus continued to attack my lungs and I found it difficult to breathe and experienced high fevers, extreme lower body pain, chills, and an array of other symptoms.

I did have a brief reprieve from all symptoms after a couple of weeks and even went on a lengthy bike ride, that, in hindsight, was premature. After a few days of feeling better, the symptoms of the virus had returned and increased exponentially that led to another hospital visit by ambulance.



Upon returning home again, I turned to the Lord and ran to the cross as the virus, or as I refer to it, this animal, continued with all of its ups and downs, hallucinations, pain, fevers, labored breathing as well as a feeling of hopelessness at times.

I knew our Lord Jesus had me in the palm of his hands and my faith in him began to take over as he walked with me through my valley.

As we go through different seasons and experiences in our lives like an illness, some grow closer to, or farther apart from our Lord, Jesus Christ.

I am blessed to know that he walks with me through every season of my life and I can profess that my faith and relationship with him are stronger now than ever before.

He provided me with the strength and support of so many people. My son and daughter were in contact with me via phone every day and I don't know what I would do without them.

My family kept in touch with me on a daily basis and they, along with so many friends, provided me with all of the essentials I needed.

I am truly blessed to have my family and friends as they stayed by my side (in thoughts and actions) throughout this entire disease process, and I will forever be grateful to them all.

Although this disease had its grip on me at times, I prayed to our Lord for positive outcomes to occur as he led me through this battle.

One of those is my continued efforts to donate plasma and the other is to be able to use this experience *to share my faith in Jesus Christ* and my story on a more personal level, to at least one person per day, to those who believe in him and to those who do not.

I continue to test negative for the virus, although, as of the date of this letter, I am managing through the residual effects of the disease from a physical and psychological perspective.

But being able to continue the pursuit of donating and sharing my story with so many individuals, believers, and non-believers on a one-on-one basis, has left me with the all-so-real feeling of blessed beyond all measure.

I want to thank Pastor Kris for giving me the opportunity to share how my faith strengthened while I was going through one of the most difficult times of my life.

I continue to pray for anyone that is going through trying times to run to the cross, as he will always receive you.

God Bless, Stay Safe,

Tony Caruana



Worship Updates

We'll be starting in-person worship outside in our parking lot on July 5th! This will be at 9 AM, and we will continue to have a second worship service on Zoom at 10:30 (you can find the link on our website, or call 1-929-205-6099 and use the meeting ID 864 2915 2029 and password 493364). Recordings of the Zoom service will continue to be posted on YouTube and Facebook as well.



Here are the procedures for in-person, outdoor worship:

- You will need to register as we have a limit of 25 family units. To do so, please call the office at 773-4400 Monday through Wednesday mornings only, or email sttimothygrandisland@gmail.com. After the first week, priority will be given to those who did not attend the previous week.
- Please pull up and park in every other spot as the ushers direct you to. They will hand you a bulletin.
- Bring lawn chairs and place them in front of your car.
- Wear a mask at all times, making sure it is fully covering your nose and mouth. If you forget your mask, motion to the usher while staying in your car, and they will bring you one.
- Maintain a distance of at least 6 feet at all times.
- Please bring hand sanitizer and use as needed.
- Pastor Kris will stand in front of the church to run the service. The length will be kept at 30 minutes.
- There will be no offering, and peace will be shared by hand signal only. We will also not be able to sing, however, we will still have instrumental music.
- The church will remain locked and bathrooms will be inaccessible.
- If it is raining, there will be no outdoor service. Please attend 10:30 worship on Zoom instead.

We look forward to meeting in person once again! Please take all precautions to keep your neighbors safe, and we will do the same.

Fellowship

Join us for conversations of the outdoors to discuss fishing, bird watching, hiking, boating, biking, and other outdoor activities. Share favorite locations and techniques, and reminisce on some of your favorite experiences with us on **Friday, July 24th at 7 PM.**



On **Wednesday, August 19th at 7 PM**, we'll be having an art therapy fellowship night over Zoom. Sit down with your project of choice—coloring book, cross stitch, sketch pad, paint supplies, wood carving, sewing, crocheting, or something else—to work, share ideas, and have relaxing conversation.



Our youth met to discuss Pentecost with social distancing protocols and enjoyed seeing each other again despite the cold weather. They have also been meeting on Zoom but are now on break for the summer. Many thanks to Karen Rose for organizing everything!



Congratulations to all Grand Island High School graduates, and especially those from our St. Timothy family: Mark Steck, Luke Webb, Ben Richard, and Alex Gottler! Wishing you many blessings as you continue your journey.

Educational Opportunities

Have you ever taken a critical look at our culture's worldview and asked where Jesus stands on it?

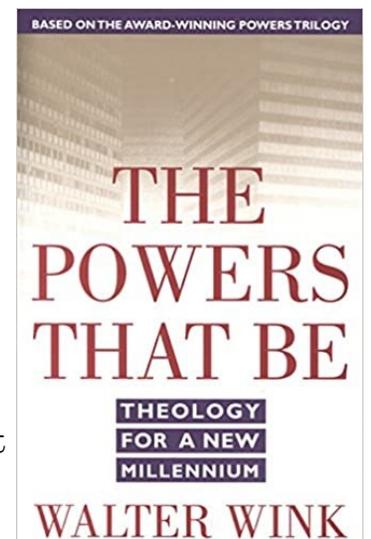
Journey with Walter Wink to identify domination systems in which power upon power interlock to create oppressive structures that are difficult to break free from. See how socialization twists us to justify, rationalize, and even champion systems of injustice. Learn how Jesus, who was so involved in the radical critique of society, has now become a way to keep society's oppressive structure from changing. Challenge the norms of our world by pitting them against what God has to say.

Allow Wink to open your eyes to the myth of redemptive violence, the dominant religion of our society, in which narrative after narrative convinces us that violence saves. This is not the gospel, nor does this in any way align with Jesus' teachings. The true gospel is revealed to be the most powerful antidote to the myth of redemptive violence, and it inaugurates the kingdom of God, which is an entirely domination-free order. No one is above another, not in power, wealth, shaming, or titles.

The Powers That Be reminds us that Jesus is decidedly nonviolent with a strong stance on equity. He introduces to us the amazing power of nonviolent love, which, like water cutting stone, proves to be an effective tool against such systems. This is the way God has chosen to overthrow evil in the world, and He gives us the power to do so.

So come: learn the Jesus way of overcoming redemptive violence and domination systems. Learn to expose evil without being made over in the likeness of evil. Learn the power of loving your enemies and the great transformation it can bring to your own life. And learn how our worldview - whether ancient, spiritual, theological, materialistic, or integral - heavily impacts our prayer life.

There is so much for our eyes to be opened to. See things from Jesus's perspective in this book, *The Powers That Be: Theology for a New Millennium* by Walter Wink, and see your discipleship transformed in powerful ways. Join us in discussion this fall.



Mission Work

Join us in a **food and COVID-supply drive!** After learning more about the Community of Good Neighbors from Pastor Miranda Hammer, it was decided during post-worship fellowship that we would have a food and COVID supply drive to support her new ministry and community at Resurrection Village. **Please bring what you can throughout the month of July to Sunday morning worship, or drop it off Monday through Thursday mornings, 11 AM to 1 PM (ring the buzzer, drop, and go).** They are especially looking for cloth masks, hand sanitizer, gloves, bags, and cleaning supplies, in addition to non-perishable food items. If you'd prefer to give monetarily, you can use the Upstate New York Synod Tithe.ly form (https://tithe.ly/give_new/www/#/tithely/give-one-time/416934) and choose the Community of Good Neighbors drop-down where it says "give to." You can also call 716-892-2489 or mail in your support to 3 Doat Street, Buffalo, NY, 14211. Thank you for reaching out to your neighbors in need.



LUTHERAN
WORLD RELIEF

Please join Lutheran World Relief in sewing masks for the poorest communities across the world. Many do not have the option of social distancing, cannot work from home, and often don't have clean water for hand washing. This is their best line of defense and they need your help. Pledge toward their goal of 75,000 cloth face masks and mail them in by boxes of 25 by October 1st. There are a few specifications that they ask, namely to use tightly woven cotton fabric, to make sure the ties and/or elastic are affixed firmly to the mask, and that no symbolism is used on the fabric due to the social conditions in the countries in which they will be distributed. Other information including a pattern and instructional video, shipping details, and the pledge form can be found on their website, lwr.org/masks.

The Niagara Falls Habitat for Humanity is preparing to open its build sites in July. They have many precautions in place and will be requiring everyone present to wear masks and maintain social distancing at all times. For those of us comfortable returning, we will be partnering with them for a Faith Build in September. More details will follow as that approaches.



Gifts to the ELCA World Hunger are being matched to \$101,000!



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

This is a great chance to double your impact and reflect Christ's light to people in need across the world. This ongoing need rarely gets coverage due to its unchanging status, but here are some statistics that reflect just how important our work in this area is:

- 821 million people around the world - that's more than 1 in 10 - can't access the food they need to live active, healthy lives.
- According to the most recent estimates, 736 million people live in extreme poverty on less than \$1.90 per day. That's 10% of the world's population.
- At some point in 2017 (the most recent year available), more than 40 million people in the United States were unsure where their next meal might come from.
- 39.7 million Americans were living in poverty in 2017. For a family of four, this means their annual household income was below \$25,094.

Donate today to contribute to sustainable solutions that get to the root of the cause by visiting <https://community.elca.org/elcaworldhunger>. You can also mail in a check payable to ELCA World Hunger to Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, P.O. Box 1809 Merrifield, VA 22116-8009, or by calling 800-638-3522. For references and further information, please see <https://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Relief-and-Development/ELCA-World-Hunger>.

If you'd like to have a further impact and are looking for other worthy organizations, the ELCA COVID-19 Response Fund and Lutheran Charities could use your help. They support communities locally and globally to provide sanitation, food, shelter, and hope. Please consider uplifting these communities



with your support. You can click [here](#) to donate to ELCA Disaster Relief, or follow [this link](#) to donate to Lutheran Charities. These can both be found on the Missions page of our website as well.

Upcoming Events

Join Pastor Kris on Facebook at 3 PM every day, Monday through Friday, as she continues to livestream a short talk and prayer time. You can also watch these after by following the link on the Worship page of our website or going to her Facebook page.



Please be aware that throughout the summer, the Child Care Center parking lot will be closed on Fridays for activities for the kids!



St. Martin-in-the-Fields Church is holding a drive-thru-only chicken barbeque on Saturday, July 11th, from 3:30-6:30 PM. The cost is \$10 per dinner, cash or credit, and it will be held at 2587 Baseline Road on Grand Island.

Trinity has a Feed The Hungry drive-thru food pick-up on the fourth Saturday of each month from 11 AM to 1 PM through September. If you know anyone in need, please let them know. Food donations are also being accepted.

The Lutheran Charities Golf Classic has been postponed until August 9th, 2021 due to public health concerns.



They are, however, excited to hold it at their new venue, Glen Oak Golf Club in East Amherst. Please consider donating to Lutheran Charities while they cannot count on fundraising events like the golf classic to support their missions at this time. Thanks.



If you'd still like to participate in a golf tournament, you can attend the Upstate New York Synod's 6th Annual Bishop's Golf Tournament, scheduled for August 22nd at 10 AM at the Victor Hills Golf Club North in Victor, NY. Our Synod is working closely with Victor Hills to ensure maximum safety in light of COVID-19. Registration is now open and will close on August 14th. Funds raised from the event will support the Bishop's Appeal, which focuses on Lay Leadership Development. Registration for the tournament can be done at <https://tithe.ly/event-registration/#/1980554>.

Prayer Chain



IN NEED
OF PRAYER

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 those 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 sttimothygrandisland@gmail.com, or contact Pastor Kris. Please also include an address where we can send cards.

Here are the people in need of our prayers right now: Jack Passanese, Jennifer Buchanan, Don Collins, Ben Richard, Michael Pachan, Wanda Cutini, Joanne M., Dick and Mary Ball, Robert Miller, Carol Glaiser, Lorraine Pfohl, Jane Goris, Mason V, Jerry Peete, Tamara Proctor, Cheryl Rosati, Jim Olmstead, Robin Aronica, Rosaria Phillippone, Robin Bengaglio Richard, the Maris Family, Sylvia and Joe Smith, Debra Saura, and Charlene Faleski.

Pastoral Care

Pastoral Care is an important resource available at St. Timothy's. Pastor Kris can be contacted at any time at 773-4400 or 715-965-5940. The following are some situations in which you should call:

- ◇ In the event of a hospitalization or placement in another health care facility. These institutions do not notify churches and pastors, so Pastor Kris will not know unless you call.
- ◇ 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.



July 2020

SUN

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

SAT

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5 Worship, 6
9 outside
and 10:30
on Zoom

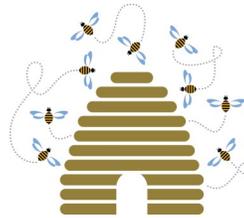
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12 Worship, 13
9 outside
and 10:30
on Zoom

Finance
Meeting,
6:30 PM

14

15

16

17

18

19 Worship, 20
9 outside
and 10:30
on Zoom

Board
Meeting,
6:30 PM

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22

23

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Outdoor
activities
talk, 7 PM



26 Worship, 27
9 outside
and 10:30
on Zoom

28

29

30

31

