

TIDINGS



December 2025

Newsletter of St. Timothy's Episcopal Church Danville, CA

As Christmas Eve and Christmas Day approach here in Danville, I keep thinking about how this year, wrapped in East Bay fog, feels especially good. Cold evenings, fog drifting across the hills, the kind of quiet and cold that settles in the bones. It's the perfect backdrop for a Christmas story of joy beginning in the dark.

In a few days, we'll walk into church. Maybe we're tired. Maybe we're eager. Maybe some are carrying more than can be named. It all belongs. The sanctuary is already beautiful with advent wreath, two nativities, with more flowers and decorations to come. We will have pageant chaos and candlelit silent nights (5pm and 7pm). All the hoo haa supports this belonging. Afterwards, we will have families to party with or families past to grieve. I hope all of us look hopefully to a new year with new joys and possibilities.

Every time I think of us in very different moments in life, my favorite compline prayer bubbles up into my conscious:

Tend the sick, Lord Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for your love's sake. Amen

For now, the Christmas story is beginning again:

In those days a decree went out...
And there were shepherds in the fields...
And the angel said, "Do not be afraid."

We've heard these words so many times, yet every year something new flickers in them. God choosing to enter the world quietly, in a backwater town, in the middle of the night. Shepherds, night-shift workers, becoming the first eyewitnesses.



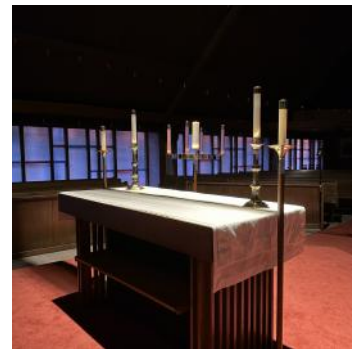
Aside from the spectacle of Christmas worship, I love Christmas itself. Glory and vulnerability come together in Jesus. He doesn't demand perfection from us. We come as hopeful, weary, joyful, grieving and we sit in the glow of a God who comes as Emmanuel, God with us.

The fog might still be hanging outside, but inside the Christmas eve sanctuary we will light a constellation of small, steady lights. We hold our candles, lift our voices, and begin to sing Silent Night. Even if we're a little off-key, it doesn't matter. For a few minutes, the world feels gentler, steadier, held together by hope. It might be my favorite church moment of the year.

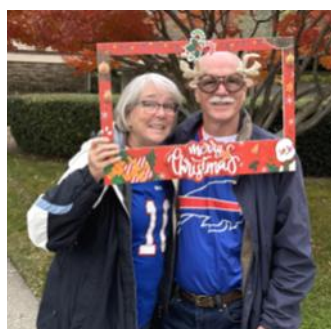
That's the magic of these days. Light comes anyway. Hope comes anyway. Love comes anyway. So, as we step into this (hopefully) foggy Danville Christmas, may we open the gift of persistent joy. A familiar story can shine again. And may the light of Christ: shared, sung, and held in community, meet you exactly where you are.

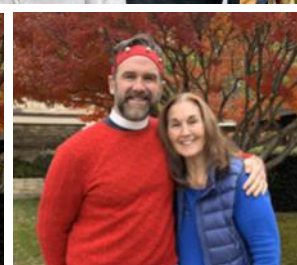
Merry Christmas

Todd



ADVENT IN PHOTOS





St. Nicholas visit & selfies

The calm before Open House...



Open House festivities



Advent candle lighting



Advent Formation





Stitchers making pillowcases for Winter Nights guests



Beautifying the Church for Advent





JANUARY BOOK GROUP

Sunday, January 18

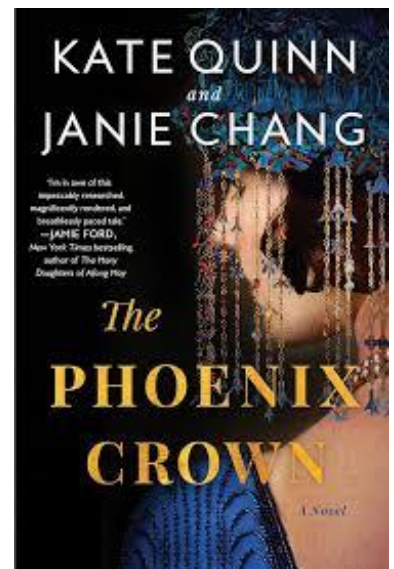
Gemma, a struggling soprano and Suling, a young Chinese embroideress both face challenges in their lives in San Francisco before the earthquake. Gemma needs help with her quest to become a well-known opera soprano and Suling is desperate to avoid a family arranged marriage. Henry Thornton, a charming railroad magnate who collects Chinese antiques seems to be the way out for each of them. Henry's collection of Chinese antiques includes items from the Beijing Summer Palace which was looted during the Boxer Rebellion of 1900.

When the 1906 earthquake hits San Francisco, Henry and many of his Chinese antiques disappear leaving behind Gemma and Suling to struggle to survive in the almost destroyed city. At that time, they meet Alice Eastwood, a botanist and together the three women struggle in the subsequent chaos and fire.

Five years later Phoenix Crown reappears at a sumptuous Paris costume ball, drawing Gemma and Suling together in one last desperate quest for justice.

Join the St Timothy's book group as we meet to discuss the book on **Sunday, January 18th** at 11:15 in the Overby Library of Grace House.

Contact Sally P (sallyspotts@gmail.com) with questions.



GOOD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY



Advent almost Christmas seems to be a season of its own. We decorate a little or a lot at home, perhaps listen to music and even bake, reveling the memories of family and planning for friends. God's power of Love is working in the world. And yet, in this season of gift giving and trying do everything right we anxiously wonder if we have enough time. We might ask

ourselves if we are really giving what we want to give, receiving what would like to receive and taking the time to be wrapped in something that we cannot explain, but know in our hearts. God is here; Christ is among us; we are God's beloved.

Can we take our weary, frantic, excited, nostalgic, hurting, wondering, caring selves into the field with the shepherds and wait for the Good News? Can we slow down enough and give ourselves the rugged space of a field with the eerie calling of sheep to one another in the night as they too watch out for one another. Can our silence that contains sirens and beeps and buzzes become a moment when we can listen to be reminded that even now, as we wait for Christmas the Angel sing and the shepherds are both afraid and filled with awe. Prayer is both a practice and a gift. Will we pause in front of our tree or a candle, or the nativity set we have meticulously set into its place, and take a few minutes to pray? God is calling to us.

"I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, Christ the Lord."

Prayer during Advent can be quiet waiting or singing a familiar Christmas tune that has new meaning this season. Prayer may be the walk in the dusk as lights come on and we reflect on what is important in our own lives and in the lives of the people we love. Prayer can be quiet waiting and waiting more. Sometimes prayer is the tears God hears, even as we know Mary was not with her mother at the time of her son's birth or disappointment for what we cannot change. Death comes even into this season; we remember loss or things that are not as we hoped. Sometimes we weep, crying out to God for healing or a reminder that the Holy One stands with us—crying out into a cacophony of what appears to be happy sounds that feel empty in our sadness.

And still the Angels call out: "Go and see! Do not be afraid!" God is here. Jesus, God's beloved Son will lead us, is leading us, will always lead us into Joy.

May the power of Love bring Joy to you and all who you Love. God we are running to Love your world and all your children.



Susan+

LITURGICAL ART FOR THE SEASONS

ADVENT

During the four Sundays of Advent, you see a large hand painted banner hanging above the altar. It is a contemporary abstract piece painted by Kathy Wills and Leslie Firth. The dark colors of blues and purples evoke a feeling of unease and mystery. Something big is coming. It is a time of anticipation and reflection. At the top of the banner there is part of a sun with golden rays. It represents the light of Christ that is coming into the world.



The wreaths on the pillars around the church have blue and lavender bows, the colors for Advent.

CHRISTMAS



On Christmas Eve, in the sanctuary you will see a large gold banner hanging above the altar. It was originally made in 2003 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Saint Timothy's. At the celebration, this huge banner was the focal point on the stage wall in the Parish Hall. It was repurposed as this Christmas banner in 2022.

The big center is a sun/star, whichever your eyes envision, that is leading us to Christ and it represents the impact He has on Christians everywhere. The borders are made up of a strong symbol of the "X". Kathy W. used this letter from the Book of Signs by Rudolf Koch, which describes the "X" as a "gift" or a sign of simple activity and what we actively do as a community, which is so relevant at Saint Timothy's.

We wish you a blessed Christmas season full of beautiful symbols.

Leslie F. and Kathy W.

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

We are very grateful for all the work that Ginger and Kent Foster and Diane Cohen have done in obtaining and delivering the poinsettias from Modesto to Saint Timothy's for Christmas. Thank you!

CHRISTMAS FOOD BOXES 2025

It's A Wrap

This year's Christmas Food Boxes drive was a huge success (and that is really an understatement!) This congregation is generous. You stepped up to help feed the hungry, something Jesus talks about over and over again in his ministry. Thank you just doesn't feel adequate to express our gratitude in making this project larger than we could ever dream.

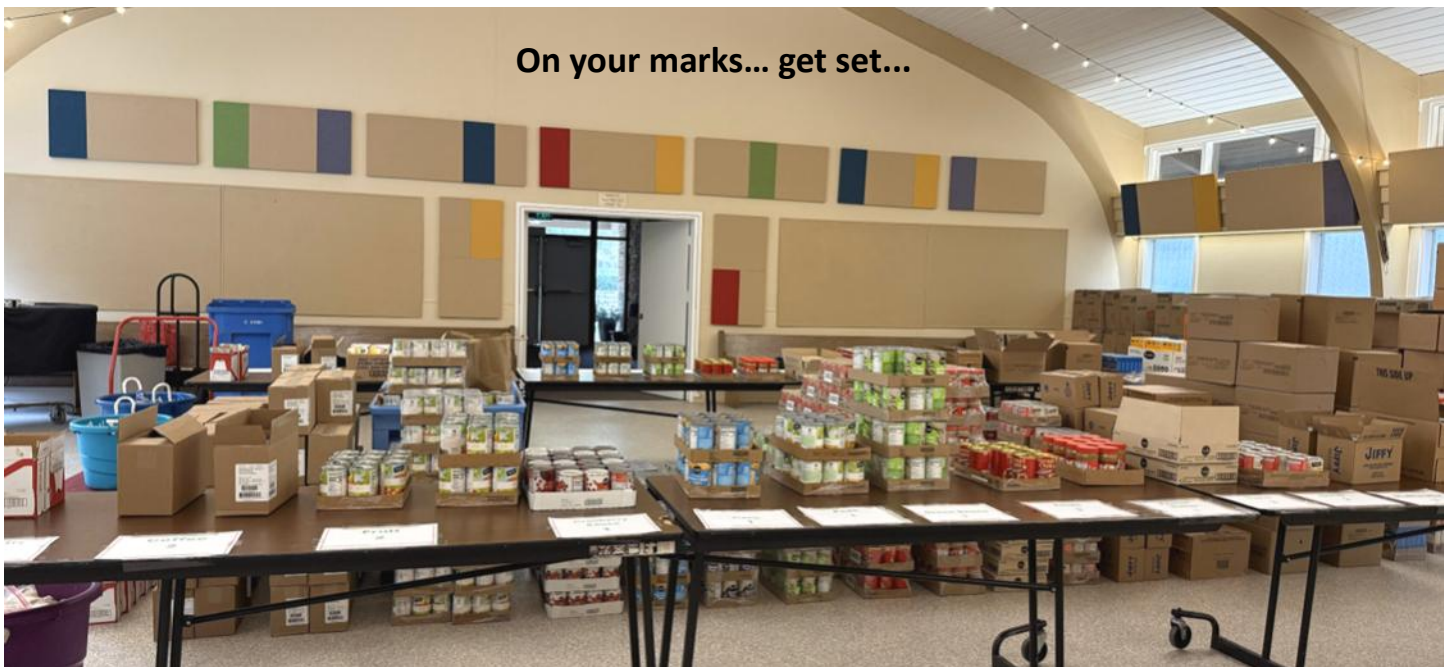
By the numbers:

- We have delivered 268 boxes to Monument Crisis Center. That translates to approximately 25 meals per box and 6,700 meals overall.
- Troop 36 made 202 boxes for us to fill on Thursday night December 4.
- We had fun as a group filling 202 of those boxes in the parish on December 6. There were 68 of us doing this and we filled the boxes the Scouts made. We were done in less than 45 minutes.
- There will be leftover funds that will head to Monument Crisis Center in January. That number is yet to be determined.

Special thank you to these people and organizations. Without them this couldn't happen:

- John Henry W and Safeway Store in San Ramon, who provided the food to fill.
- Debbie K and Troop 36 who made our boxes
- John G who secured our U-Haul
- Sally S P who trained us well!
- And **everyone** who donated their time, talent, and treasures!

Cathy and John Hager





GO!!!!
The group hard at work packing food into the boxes.



Look at all those boxes!



All packed up and ready to go!



5 and 1/2 pallets delivered to MCC. Awesome crew!



A job well done! Many hands make short work!

DIOCESE OF CALIFORNIA EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

St. Timothy's hosted the December meeting of the Executive Council of the Diocese of California. It was a delight to host the Council at St. Timothy's. I give a big shout out to my lovely bride Kimberly, who is the hostess with the mostest.

The Executive Council serves as board of directors of the Diocese of California. Its duties include assisting Diocesan Convention in the implementation of budgets, policies, and programs. I will serve as the Chair of EC for 2026. In the selfie below, I am pictured with the incoming Vice-Chair, Sarah Lawton, and Secretary, the Rev AnnaMarie Hoos.

If you'd like to learn more, go to <https://www.diocal.org/governance/executive-council/>
Todd



DIOCESE OF CALIFORNIA NEWS

Check out the write up about St. Timothy's Food Boxes!
<https://mailchi.mp/diocal/121125>



Conventions, Conferences,
Retreats & Pilgrimages

Jan. 9-10 | [Retreat: Essential Question](#) | St. Columba's Inverness with Rachel Gaunt

Jan. 10, 17, 24, & 31 | [Trail and Canvas](#) | Bishop's Ranch

Jan. 16 to 18 | [Living into a New Story: Desert Sojourn Retreat](#) | Spirit in the Desert Retreat Center

July 21 to August 1, 2026 | [Pilgrimage to Israel](#) | The Ven. Miguel Bustos

July 28 - 31, 2026 | Province 8 Summer Gathering for High School Youth

Oct 8 - 15, 2026 | [2026 Pilgrimage to Italy](#) | Progressive Pilgrimage, Rev. Jon Owens

COMING SOON! STARTING ON DECEMBER 28



STARTS
* DECEMBER 28, 2025 *
TO JANUARY 18, 2026

SHARE THE WARMTH SOCKS/CLOTHES DRIVE for LOAVES & FISHES

* ITEMS YOU CAN DONATE *

SOCKS: wool or wool blend . KNIT CAPS . HATS . SCARVES .
GLOVES . MITTENS . WARM CLOTHING - JACKETS . SWEATERS .
COATS . PANTS . SHIRTS . MYLAR BLANKETS . PLASTIC PONCHOS
Items may be new or gently worn. (see Amazon for blankets and ponchos)

* Collection boxes are in the entry of Grace House on Sundays
until 11:00 am, and during office hours: 10 to 3 Tues. - Thurs.
and on blue carts outside the church after Sunday services.

Please help us sort the items on Jan. 18th in Grace House .
For info: Contact LeslieFirth@comcast.net

For your convenience, feel free to **order**
needed items and **ship directly to**
St. Timothy's (1550 Diablo Rd 94526).

Below are Amazon links to some example /
suggested items.

Click [HERE](#) for ponchos.

Click [HERE](#) for thermal blankets

Click [HERE](#) for wool / wool blend socks

Click [HERE](#) for knit caps



WINTER NIGHTS FAMILY SHELTER

**Coming to St. Timothy's
January 19 – February 2, 2026**



With the help of St. Timothy's and Beth Chaim volunteers, we will once again open the Parish Hall to become a Winter Nights Shelter hosting families with children.

We will provide breakfast, lunch, and dinner; laundry services; showers; assistance with homework; space for play and relaxation. Transportation, counseling, and other services to help families move into stable housing are provided by the Winter Nights Shelter program. <https://cccwinternights.org/>

St. Timothy's has hosted the Family Shelter since the program began in 2004. We also support other programs offered by Winter Nights with donations of extra food and supplies to:

Oasis Day Center – During the daytime, families can go to the Oasis Center in Concord with access to laundry, computers and other support services.

Safe Parking Program – Provide a safe place to park overnight for families and individuals living in their cars. Clients have access to restrooms, food, and weekly mobile showers.

Continued Success Program – Maintains connections with alumni households to help the families stay housed.

To learn more about the various volunteer opportunities and to sign up online, go to:

[Winter Nights Family Shelter - ST. TIMOTHY'S | DANVILLE](#)

Signups will also be available on Sundays

Contact Joann at joannmarieoliver@gmail.com



VESTRY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

December 17, 2025

The Vestry met on Wednesday, December 17, 2025, at 6:30pm in Grace House.

MOTIONS:

- The Vestry unanimously approved the minutes from November 19th Vestry Meeting, the reports and documents submitted by the treasurer, and several submitted rector and commission reports submitted prior to the meeting.
- The Vestry unanimously approved the 2026 Housing Resolutions for Rev. Todd Bryant and Rev. Susan Geissler-O'Neil.
- The Vestry unanimously approved to accept the Diocese's 3.2% COLA increase.

Financials

St. Timothy's Danville Treasurer's Report

December 17, 2025

Financial Summary for the 11 Months ending November 30, 2025

| | Actual | Budget |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Total Income | \$865,743 | \$725,177 |
| Total Expenses | <u>\$779,129</u> | <u>\$814,444</u> |
| Net Operating Income | \$86,613 | (\$89,267) |

Comments

- St. Timothy's continues to be in decent financial condition through November 2025.
- November income was a negative \$2,547.
- Year-to-date our net operating income is + \$86,613, indicating that we should end the year above break-even.

FYI

Parish members are welcome to attend Vestry meetings. The next meeting is on Wednesday January 21st, at 6:30 in the Conference Room in Grace House.

The minutes of the Vestry meeting will be filed in the Parish Office after they are approved by the Vestry.

Respectfully submitted by Kris Manning

ANNUAL MEETING

February 1

Immediately following our **ONE worship service** (10am), we present the coming year's budget, celebrate our ministries, elect vestry, and elect delegates. The annual meeting will be online, but to vote on anything, you must be present in church.

CONTACT US

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(925) 837-4993 x114

Rector@SaintTimothysDanville.org

The Rev. Susan Geissler-O'Neil -

Associate Rector

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Sgeissleroneil@SaintTimothysDanville.org

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(925) 837-4993 x115

MusicDir@SaintTimothysDanville.org

Monika Miller - Facilities

(925) 837-4993 x111

Facilities@SaintTimothysDanville.org

Steve Zimmerman - Bookkeeper

(925) 837-4993 x116

Bookkeeper@SaintTimothysDanville.org

Dick Firth - Treasurer (Volunteer)

(925) 837-4993 x117

Treasurer@SaintTimothysDanville.org

Kimberly Bryant - Parish Administrator

(925) 837-4993 x110

Parish@SaintTimothysDanville.org

Carleen Carns - Pledge Secretary
(Volunteer)

Pledges@SaintTimothysDanville.org

Pastoral Care Line

(925) 837-4993 x120



THE DIOCESE OF
CALIFORNIA

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN THE BAY AREA

To subscribe to DioCal News, Events &
Resources Newsletter:

<https://www.diocal.org/news-events/past-diocesan-newsletters/>



YOU'RE INVITED TO

Christmas Worship

CHRISTMAS EVE

3pm

Children's pageant
Christmas carols
Eucharist

5pm

Christmas carols
Eucharist
"Silent Night" with candles

7pm

Christmas carols & Choir
Eucharist
"Silent Night" with candles

CHRISTMAS DAY

10am - Christmas carols and Eucharist

ST. TIMOTHY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

PLEASE JOIN US FOR
A CELEBRATION OF

The Epiphany



Sunday, January 54
8 & 10 am

St. Timothy's Episcopal Church