



The WORD

Dear St. Timothy's Family,

August 2026

Back in May of this year, Pope Leo XIV, the 267th Bishop of Rome, issued an Encyclical Letter entitled "ON SAFEGUARDING THE HUMAN PERSON IN THE TIME OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE." It was this Pope's first "Circular Letter" and it made some waves in the general public for its questioning of the role of artificial intelligence in human flourishing in a Christian worldview.¹



I found the letter interesting-- particularly the Pontiff's use of the Book of Nehemiah in his argument. The introduction retells the story of that (somewhat obscure) Old Testament book and specifically how Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem after exile and rebuilt the city walls. According to Pope Leo XIV, the biblical image demonstrates:

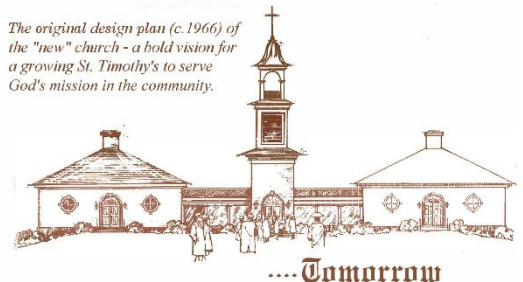
*an undertaking with God at the center, which rebuilds relationships before rebuilding with stones. Thus, ancient Jerusalem rediscovers a common language — not one of uniformity, but one of communion, namely the harmony that arises when all persons assume their own role and recognize that their strength comes from the Lord.*²

Elsewhere in the document, Pope Leo XIV warns of the danger of dehumanization of our neighbor and reducing the other to a means to an end, suggesting instead the "way of Nehemiah" which emphasizes working together for the glory of God.

Nehemiah, of course, has been on my mind this year because the book was the centerpiece of our Stewardship Campaign for 2026. Perhaps the Vatican saw our publications and got on the Nehemiah bandwagon! In all seriousness, you might recall our use of this image to the right to highlight our church working together to build up our small portion of God's kingdom here on earth. Last Fall, I preached on Nehemiah and we heard stories from yesteryear about our predecessors banding together to "rise up and build" our current building (*sans* bell tower) as well as the various ministries that make this parish so special.

St. Timothy's Episcopal Church
Herndon, Virginia

The original design plan (c.1966) of the "new" church - a bold vision for a growing St. Timothy's to serve God's mission in the community.



STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN 2026

"Let Us Rise Up and Build" Nehemiah 2:18

What do all those efforts have in common? Our baptismal covenant provides the answer: "Striv(ing) for justice and peace among all people, respect(ing) the dignity of every human being,"³ Not for

¹ [Encyclical Letter of His Holiness Leo XIV Magnifica Humanitas \(15 May 2026\)](#)

² https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv/en/encyclicals/documents/20260515-magnifica-humanitas.html#Two_biblical_images

³ *Book of Common Prayer*, 305.

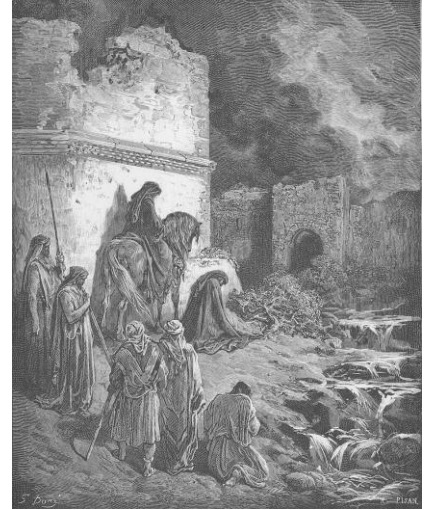
profit, not for fame or human recognition, not to serve an impersonal end or to further the latest technological fad.

Rather, across 158 years, a couple of buildings, and thousands of parishioners, St. Timothy's Episcopal Church in Herndon, Virginia has sought to build bridges of hope, spaces of unity, corridors of justice, and pathways to God. We have done so haltingly and with error, but like Nehemiah and his people we have sought to do so while listening to God's will and the needs of the community.

In the following pages of this edition of the WORD, I have provided evidence of that very work that we have done recently in our current building. It's been a busy season for repair and modification. Some of it is visible, some of it is not. So much of it has been led by the skillful and generous leadership of Deke Smith, a modern-day Nehemiah if there ever were one. Deke has given so much time and effort, over many decades, to keeping our building in good shape. We are lucky to have him for this next chapter of building and rebuilding at St. Timothy's—as we deal with our Bioretention Pond, look towards replacing the aging HVAC system, and all the other projects that need to be taken care of. Deke needs help, and so if you are willing to lend a hand in terms of Buildings and Grounds, please let me know.

To return to the *MAGNIFICA HUMANITAS* Encyclical, in its conclusion, Pope Leo XIV returns to the image of Nehemiah in a section called “The Construction Site of our Time”

As we look to the future, I would like to recall the image of Nehemiah whom we chose as our companion and guide at the outset. Nehemiah heard the cry of a devastated city, brought that pain to prayer, discerned before God, asked for help, received permission to return, organized the work, confronted internal and external resistance and rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem with the assistance of the people, brick by brick. In this era of digital transformation, I see in him a striking parable of our own vocation, which is not to be passive spectators of social and cultural fractures, nor mere commentators on what is crumbling, but men and women prepared to enter the construction sites of history — research laboratories, technology companies, schools, the media, institutions and local communities — in order to rebuild what has collapsed and protect what is threatened. Like Nehemiah, we too are called to unite listening and courage, prayer and responsibility, so that, even when a technocratic mentality or partisan interests seem to prevail, the human city may become a more fitting place to live.



I could not have said it better myself! As the summer continues, one can look forward to our Stewardship Season 2027 (and Nehemiah's companion book of Ezra) while marveling at the work below being done to “rise up and build” again for God's kingdom here on earth.

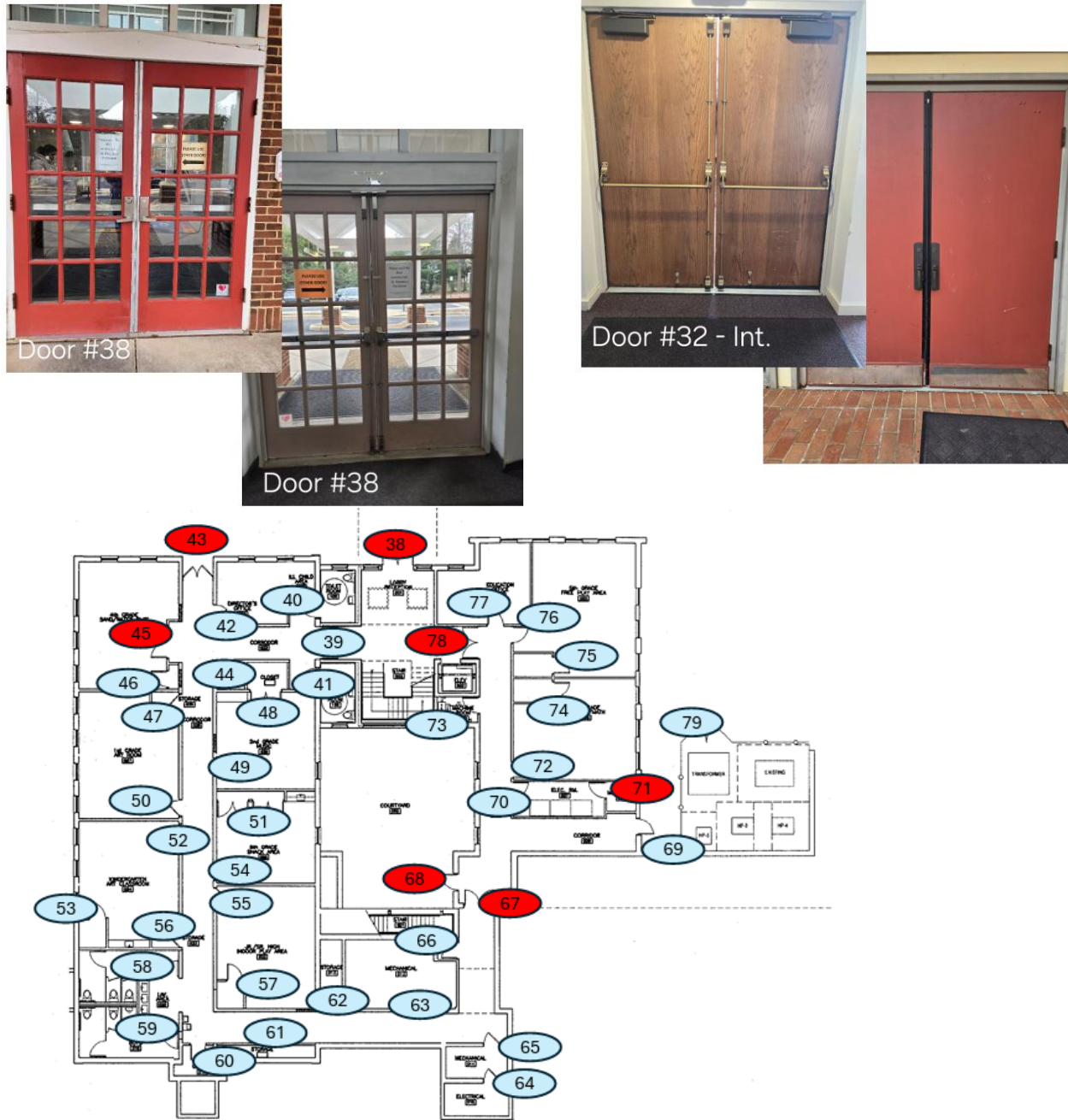
Yours in Christ,

CHARLES+

DOORS:

Did you know that we have 79 doors at St. Timothy's?⁴ Pictured below is a schematic of the lower level alone. Some of the ones slated for repair are #38 (the main entranceway to the Pre-School) and #32 (the double doors into the Narthex). These are some of our most used doors and important to maintain for safety and energy efficiency.

Lower Level



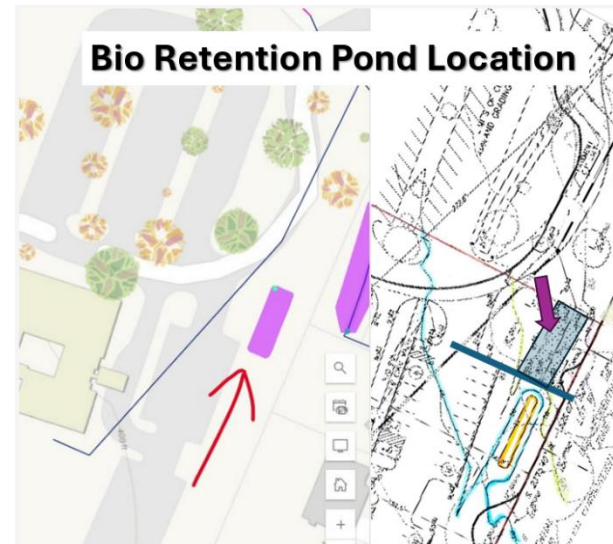
⁴ For an exhaustive description of “all things door-related” at St. Tim’s, that also demonstrates Deke’s thoroughness and expertise, click [here](#).

HVAC:

As you may well know, we have a number of our HVAC units that are either original to the building or way past their life expectancy, or both. The Church recently contracted with [Strickler Associated, Ltd.](#), a local engineering firm, to provide an “HVAC Evaluation Report” for the church. A Draft Version of the Report can be found [here](#) and will be used by the Finance/ Buildings & Grounds Committees as well as the Vestry to decide next steps in our heating and cooling issues in our building.

Bioretention Pond:

Alas, this is the project that “launched a thousand emails”! In short, every five years the Town of Herndon requires an inspection report for our Stormwater Drainage Pond. Our Pond lies to the south of the driveway from the Spring Street entrance. Deke has worked assiduously to satisfy the inspection requirements and we are still waiting for the final approval. As with many things on this list, it makes those involved miss the departed Keith Sinclair dearly. Deke’s report on the ongoing project can be found [here](#). Go check the area out next time to remind oneself how complicated managing an eight-acre campus can be.



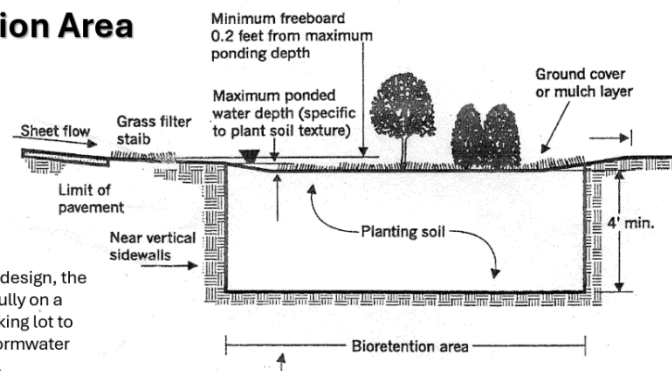
Tree Removal:

Trees are another “evergreen” (pun intended) aspect of maintaining our grounds. The Crepe Myrtle at the front of the church had to be removed

because it was causing too much water damage with its growth/ leaves. It was sad, though, to see the beautiful tree (pictured to the right) go. On the dead tree front, we removed a couple across the campus (one of which is pictured below).

Bioretention Area Design

While this was the design, the actual location is fully on a slope from the parking lot to the neighboring stormwater drainage structure.



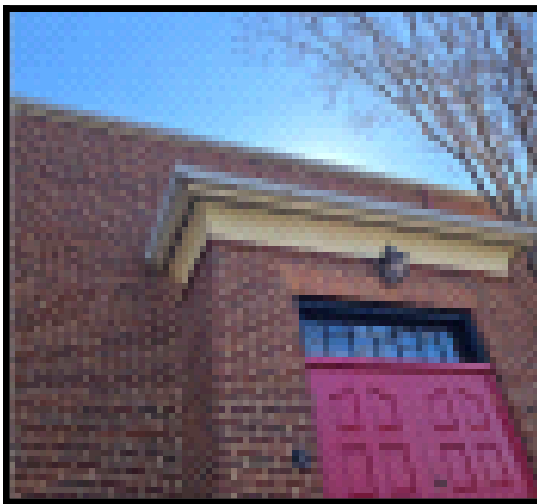
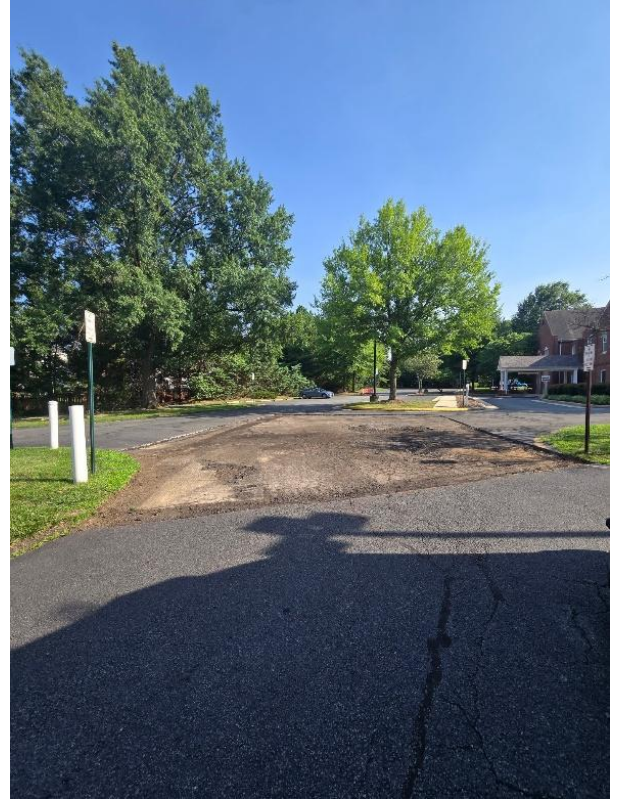
Paving:

One of the more noticeable improvements has been the paving of various potholes and “troughs” in our parking lot. In the future, a complete repaving and relining will need to be done but these steps have helped tremendously in both driving and walking across the parking lot.

We have also supplemented the “speed hump” with yellow lines to make it more noticeable.

Leaking:

All throughout the building, frequent maintenance is needed to prevent water from causing damage inside the building. Cosmetically-speaking, hopefully you have noticed the new shade of red on the doors that lead into the office area, as well as the brightened white trim.



News from the Service Ministry

SUMMER LINK FOOD DRIVE A BIG SUCCESS

The Service Ministry would like to thank St. Timothy's for your overwhelming support for the LINK Summer food drive. The amount of food donated will be a big help to those in our community experiencing food insecurity. This food drive collected nearly 100 bags. We asked for breakfast cereals and toilet paper, and we received large quantities of each. The large amount of donations came at a good time as food insecurity is on the rise in the Herndon area. Once again, you have shown how St. Timothy's supports those in our community that need assistance. If you still have a blue bag, it is never too late to drop off a filled bag at the LINK basket located near Henry Hall. Our next food drive will be in October. Stay tuned for more details. However, you do not have to wait until the next food drive to donate to LINK. We accept food year-round and you can drop it off at the LINK basket at any time.

Thank you so very much for stepping up. The Service Ministry thanks you for putting your faith to work to serve our neighbors.

Respectfully submitted by Tom Bosworth

St. Timothy's – you've done it again!

Thank you is not enough to express the Service Ministries' appreciation for the overwhelming response to this year's backpack drive. Together we achieved the goal of collecting 50 backpacks suitable in size for high school students. This ensures that students are well prepared and perhaps, a little excited, to have brand new equipment to start the school year. The backpacks have been delivered to the Cornerstones Free from Hunger Center where they are filled with necessary supplies along with wholesome snacks. The Back-to-School drive, sponsored by Cornerstones, provides over 2,000 students in Fairfax and Loudon counties with supplies necessary to start a new academic year.

Thank you for putting your faith to work for children in our community!



Thank you's for Past Social Ministry Projects

Lenten Outreach Update: An Act of Kindness by St. Timothy's Changed a Young Man's Life

Two years ago in St. Timothy's Lenten Outreach program, members of the church donated musical instruments. One of the students that received an instrument was Anton Heck. He received a cornet. It was the first instrument he had ever owned. His parents, active members of the Park View High School Band Boosters and integral members of the community say that getting this instrument sparked a passion for music and music education in him they had never seen before. He quickly became the key member of the horn section, a soloist in the jazz band, and student conductor for the band. This spring, Anton won the prestigious US Marine Corps Semper Fidelis Music Award for exemplary music students and graduated in June. He has enrolled at Hampton University majoring in music education with the goal of becoming a high school band teacher. He also recently earned the rank of Eagle with Troop 157 in Sterling. Additionally the many guitars and other instruments that were donated continue to have a lasting impact on students as music is a gift that lasts forever. Once again, St. Timothy's has shown great love through small acts of kindness.

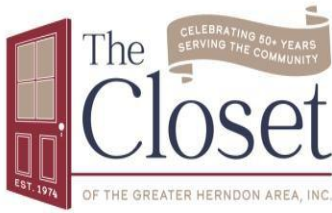


She Believes in Me

*Dear St. Timothy's Episcopal Church,
Thank you for supporting She Believes in Me and for caring about children, families and our community. SBIM has helped me become more confident and realize that even small acts of kindness can make a big difference. Your support makes these opportunities possible.*

Thank you for believing in us and for helping us become the best versions of ourselves. We hope you enjoy these homemade treats as a small thank you from our teen ambassadors.

*With gratitude,
Meylin*



News from The Closet of the Greater Herndon Area, Inc.

At the July Board meeting, grants totaling \$45,250 were approved for the following organizations: AART, BRAWS, By Faith Fund, Cindy's Legacy, Cornerstones, Fairfax Diapers, FISH, Kids Give Back, Reston for Lifetime, She Believes in Me, Taste of Home, Vecinos Unidos and Wellness Loudoun. Grants are awarded four times a year.

Save these dates:

August 7-9 - Tax free shopping weekend in August.

September 5 – Third Annual Fashion Show at The Closet

October 16-17 – Everything Christmas at Moose Lodge

Thank you for supporting The Closet by Shopping, Donating and Volunteering.

Interested in volunteering? Contact any of the Board representatives below:

Betsy Bosworth

kbldc@verizon.net

Holly Hartge

mhhvirginia@verizon.net

Maria LaWalt

mjlawalt@verizon.net

VESTRY 2026



Rob Huizar (2027) – *Senior Warden*
rhuitar@gmail.com
(713) 391-5214



Wanda Rixon (2028) – *Junior Warden*
SQueenofE@aol.com
703-209-7661



Varun Lal (2029) – *Christian Ed/ Pre-School*
Varun.p.lal@gmail.com
703-244-1544



Johnny Ellis (2028) – *Finance/ Social Justice*
Jellis.ems@gmail.com
845-926-7673



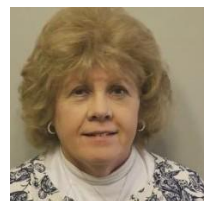
Gene Mechling (2029) – *Service*
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703-599-8894



John McGrath (2028) – *Latino Ministry*
jdksmcgrath@verizon.net
(703) 376-1176



Sharon Nachman (2027) – *Women of St Tim's*
sharonsnachman@gmail.com
703-598-6478



Christine Cozza (2029) – *Hospitality*
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703-568-4780



Terry Dominiak (Alternate) – *Shrine Mont*
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414-383-8700



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www.saint-timothys.org

Service Times

Saturday:	7 pm	Spanish Service/Rite II
Sunday:	8 am	Rite I (English)
Sunday:	10 am	Rite II (English)
		Also available via Zoom
		(Livestream on
		YouTube/
		Facebook/Website)
Please check the website for up-to-date		
information about opportunities to		
worship		

Welcome New Members

To transfer your membership to St. Timothy's or to find out if you are a registered member, contact the church office (office@saint-timothys.org) or fill out the Parishioner Information Form.

Editor of The Word

Ron Boggio
wordeditor@saint-timothys.org

**Submission deadline for the
 September 2026 issue of The
 Word is Tuesday, August 25**

If we do not have an email address for you and your family, or if your email has changed, send the information to office@saint-timothys.org.

The Word is published monthly and emailed to members and friends the first week of the month. It also appears on the website. If you wish to receive a copy by mail, please notify the church office (office@saint-timothys.org). Copies of *The Word* are also available in the office.

Rector

The Rev. Charles R. Cowherd
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 703-437-3790 x12



Organist/Choirmaster

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 703-437-3790 x16



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 703-437-3790

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St. Timothy's Pre-School Director

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PSdirector@saint-timothys.org
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Duane Hartge – Treasurer
treasurer@saint-timothys.org

Rose Berberich - Registrar

