



## Synod Assembly Notes

In early June, Church Council President Lanny Repman and Pastor Fred represented TOL at the Upstate NY Synod Assembly in Syracuse.

The theme this year was exploring "Adaptive Leadership through the lens of faith, hope and love." Adaptive Leadership is "the practice of mobilizing people to tackle tough challenges in churches, and thrive. This requires us to learn new things as we seek solutions." In summary, the way things have always been done requires re-invention in this day and age.

There were about 250 attendees and there was a lot of sharing and learning. One of the highlights for me was the panel interviews with church leaders and what they have done to enrich the lives of their congregations and communities.

We will continue to pray for the leadership of our church and the Synod as we navigate these challenging and changing times.

Your brother in Christ,  
*Lanny Repman*

## Spotlight on Charlie!

Charlie Schmidtke was recently interviewed by Logan Crawford on British TV (The Spotlight Network). Crawford is an Emmy Award winning British actor and TV host. The video appears on YouTube and is about 15 minutes long ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZPoWU4h0mZU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZPoWU4h0mZU)).

Charlie discusses his book "My I's: Isms, Ignorance, Interrelationships, and Insights", which grew out of his life experiences on his journey to personal growth; how he looks at the world today. His topics are relevant today: race, religion, gender, along with grief—"Societal Griefism." He believes there is currently a need for respect among people; restoring respect. Charlie's comments challenge people to examine their own "isms" and how they can apply them to their own personal growth journeys.

We hope you will make time to watch this thoughtful and meaningful interview.



## Triple-header Craft Night

The Women's Group (WWI) recently had an evening of crafting including card-making, Japanese Marble painting and stringing "Job's Tear" necklaces. Nancy brought a treasure trove of paper supplies and interesting stickers to challenge our creative spirits. Diane demonstrated the marbling, and we had fun with the floating colors, finding pictures and designs in the swirls. Many of us already have made necklaces from the Job's Tears that were grown in Diane's garden, but different colored beads made for different looking necklaces. These are great gifts too!



A bonus to our evening was the addition of Kathy's granddaughters. It's always neat to see art through the eyes of children. They had fun and wondered when we could do this again!

## Sermon Discussion/Input with Pastor Fred Wednesday, July 24, at Noon in the Fireside Room

Pastor Fred invites you to join him in a bag-lunch discussion of the texts for the next month of sermons. Please let him know if you plan to attend so he can prepare materials.

## New Location for Donations/Collections!

**Thank you** to the C/E/O\* Team for planning, reorganizing and relocating the collecting of mission items that were previously gathered in the narthex. The new location is in the hallway near the main bulletin board (next to the barrels for can and bottle recycling and Friends of Night People items). You'll find newly-labeled plastic bins for your donations—thank you Stephanie and Nancy. Watch for new signs directing you to the new arrangement. We look forward to having items gathered in one place. (Note: The pantry shopping cart will remain in the narthex.)

\*Communications/Evangelism/Outreach

## BW's BBQ in September with Crafts and Baskets

"Save the Date" for **Saturday, September 7**. There will be a craft fair, basket raffle and BW's BBQ. If you are interested in a table for the craft fair, please email the church office.

## Trinity Tidings, July 2024

We invite you to join us for worship with Holy Communion, Sundays at 11:00 AM. (in-church or on Zoom)



### ELCA Prayer Ventures, July 2024

- † “Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice! Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications!” (Psalm 130:1-2). Lift up your worries and fears to God, trusting that God listens and responds to our lamentations.
- † Pray for our neighbors who suffer and long for peace in places of conflict and war. Pray that we will not grow weary in our concern, support and prayer and that we will not rest until there is peace and healing.
- † Give thanks for everything that God has revealed and given to us through Jesus Christ that stirs our hope and joy: God’s abundant grace and mercy, God’s will for our present life and future, and the promise of eternal life in the kingdom of God.
- † “The Lord is my shepherd” (Psalm 23:1). We may not be familiar with the work of shepherds anymore, but we do know the joy and relief of having God in our lives to guide us, comfort us, restore us and walk with us through darkness and evil. Give thanks and praise to God, our ever-present shepherd!
- † Pray for peace and civility in our nation, for the mending of rifts and ideologies that isolate us and for the diverse gifts, perspectives and life experiences that enrich and inform our life together.
- † **Independence Day** Promise God to cherish and not abuse the blessings of liberty, to work for change wherever there is injustice and inequity, and to accompany our global neighbors and companion churches in striving for freedom, justice and voice.
- †

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### Prayer for Trinity Old Lutheran and Augustana Lutheran Churches

Inspire us to be good stewards of the resources you have entrusted to us. Teach us to give freely of ourselves and to offer our lives in service. Show us your will for the ministries at Augustana and Trinity Old Lutheran. Strengthen our relationships in this community as we serve our neighbors in love.

Happy Independence Day!



## Trinity Tidings

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Trinity Old Lutheran Church  
3445 Sheridan Drive, Amherst, NY 14226  
Church Office: 716-836-4868 or 716-836-4990  
Church email: trinityoldlutheranchurch@gmail.com  
Karen Mulartrick and Jan Sherman, Co-Editors



### Mission for July: Lutheran Charities of WNY (LCWNY)

“Lutheran Charities’ primary mission is to support Western New York communities with kindness, compassion, justice and generosity, joining people where they are with what they need. We achieve this by underwriting grant funding for local agencies throughout the year, providing education, food, health care, social support and more to our neediest and underserved neighbors in Western New York. Uniting individuals, Lutheran congregations, corporations, and community organizations, Lutheran Charities provides a visible and viable force within the WNY community in terms of dollar amount as well as program support.”

[from: LCWNY at [www.wnylutherancharities.org](http://www.wnylutherancharities.org)]

Currently, there are 23 local organizations that receive grant funding—including TOL’s Sandwich Ministry and the RIDE Program at Augustana LC.

For your monetary donations, please use the marked envelopes found on the table in the narthex or use [Tithe.ly](https://www.tithe.ly) through the TOL website. If using the mail, please enter “LCWNY” on your check memo.

### June Mission: ELCA Disaster Response, US Tornadoes

Thank you for your donations to ELCA Disaster Response in support of those recovering/rebuilding after dealing with many recent, deadly and destructive tornadoes in the mid-west US. ELCA’s presence and assistance will remain until the process is complete.

### Support for Local Food Pantries

Your donations in support of the Community of Good Neighbors Mobile Food Pantry in Buffalo and Good Shepherd Lutheran’s pantry in Tonawanda are greatly appreciated. Suggested items needed are listed below.



Please place your donations in the narthex shopping cart or leave them in the elevator entrance during the week (Tuesday to Friday, 9:00 AM to Noon). Thank you!

- Canned fruits, vegetables, beans, soup, tuna and chicken
- Peanut butter and jelly
- Cereal and other breakfast items (oatmeal, grits)
- Pasta, Mac-and-Cheese
- Spaghetti and pasta sauces
- Instant potatoes
- Paper products, feminine hygiene products

Gift cards (Tops or Wegmans) (mail to church office)

## “Christian Cancer Support”

If you are on a cancer journey and are in need of support, please contact Linda Sokoley. She is on a journey as well and she can offer you support, hope and healing.

Please contact Linda through Augustana LC’s office at 716-832-5720 or by email at [augustchurch@yahoo.com](mailto:augustchurch@yahoo.com).



## ELCA Prayer Ventures, July 2024: Community

Do you see God doing great work with things that may seem small or insignificant to us? Lift up in prayer the things we witness that restore our faith, stir hope and reassure us that God is present and active in our lives, communities and world.

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### Adult Retreat—October 4, 5 and 6

Lake Chautauqua Lutheran Center  
Retreat Coordinator: Charlie Schmidtke

#### “Who am I?”

*Am I the same person I was 30 years ago?  
Does our personality change as we get older?  
How have I become the person I am?*

*These and other questions will be raised during our time together.*

This will be a time for us to gather again in fellowship, laughter and prayer. The retreat is open to all who are 18+ years of age. Complete retreat information is posted on the main bulletin board, as well as the sign-up sheet. If you worship with us on Zoom, please call or email the church office and we can add your name to the list.

Reservations Deadline, September 22. Please contact Trinity Old Lutheran at 716-836-4868 or through his email at [schmidtkecharles@gmail.com](mailto:schmidtkecharles@gmail.com).

Payment is due by Friday, October 4. Please make checks payable to Charles Schmidtke. Information packets will be sent to everyone who registers.



If you have any questions, please contact the church office (716-836-4868).

## Operation Christmas Child

A change for July donations—suggested items will be children’s books, puzzles, travel size games, and flash cards. (The school supplies seem to go on sale more often in August, so it seems that would be a better month to purchase those things, a change from the original July request.)



Your items can be placed in the newly-marked bin located in the hallway by the bulletin board. Thank you so much for any and all donations!

Kelly and Debbie

## My Musings

by Diane Schmidtke

### Purgatory

I always am surprised how one thing leads to another. I begin writing about an idea that intrigues me and end up miles from the original path.

Recently I watched a “20/20” episode which took place in Utah. It was a true and horrific story with connections to Mormon Fundamentalism. The mother involved is now in jail for 15 years, convicted on many counts of aggravated child abuse. While this could be a possible theme or topic to write about, something else struck me as interesting and ironic. It was the name of the prison where she was held pre-trial: “Purgatory Correctional Facility.”

I did a double-take when these words flashed on the screen. No! This wasn’t really the name of a jail, was it? Yes, indeed! Although it might be quite fitting, I had trouble believing my eyes. As it turns out, after a little research, I discovered that the Purgatory Correctional Facility is the county jail of Washington County, Utah, located near St. George on Purgatory Flats. It is a co-ed facility of up to 500 inmates. Some people prefer the name Washington Jail. In 2008, in order to cut operation costs, it was decided to charge inmates for staying in Purgatory. Now, there’s a novel idea!

I can only imagine some of the local comments:

- “Well, I’m headed to Purgatory for my shift!”
- “Oh, you’ll see it about a mile down the road, right next to Purgatory, near the Virgin River.”
- “Tell Joe I’ll meet him in Purgatory!”
- “When was the last time you visited someone in Purgatory?”

There is a simple definition in “Oxford Languages”:

Purgatory: *noun* (in Roman Catholic doctrine) a place or state of suffering inhabited by the souls of sinners who are expiating their sins before going to heaven...”

The notion of purgatory was one that Martin Luther rejected when he turned his back on the Roman Catholic Church and posted his 95 Theses. He did not find purgatory mentioned in the Bible, and he believed one does not, cannot, work one’s way into Heaven.

It’s only God’s grace  
Freely given—fills that space...  
This is the true gift...

Sometimes a haiku says it best....

*Used with permission.*

## Ways to Give to TOL



Online: [Tithe.ly](https://www.tithe.ly) is available. For instructions, please visit the church website at [www.trinityoldlutheran.com](http://www.trinityoldlutheran.com) or download the

[Tithe.ly](https://www.tithe.ly) app to your smartphone. Please call the church office at (716) 836-4868 if you have any questions.

Giving by mail: Please send your checks to the church and to the attention of the Financial Secretary.

*“No act of kindness, no matter how small,  
is ever wasted.” Aesop*

## Adult Ed. Classes with Charlie Schmidtke Study Notes: “Temple or Mount of Olives”

### Part II: Jesus in the Temple

We'll start with some background information about Passover celebrations in Jesus' day. Passover had become a very important part of Jewish tradition dating back to the years the Jews were in captivity in Babylon (6<sup>th</sup> century BCE). The Passover was restored as a central festival to celebrate and the festivities in Jerusalem were popular to attend. It made sense for Mary and Joseph to take their family to Jerusalem during the Passover festival: there would be large groups of people traveling from Galilee to Jerusalem and they could do so safely. I'm sure friends from Nazareth would go along with them.

So, Luke tells us the family went to Jerusalem annually for Passover. There are two items to note: Jesus' age and what Passover was like at that time. In Jesus' day Jerusalem had a population of about 20,000 to 30,000 people but for the celebration of Passover the population grew to 150,000 people, or more. The Jewish leaders took painstaking care to ensure that the city remained ceremonially clean—no Gentiles and keep the Romans in their place. Menstruating women would be barred from the Temple area. Originally, Passover was just one day followed by seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread - they were considered to be two separate celebrations ordained by God. During the Babylonian Captivity, however, the Judaeans combined the Night of Passover with the Feast of Unleavened Bread to have an eight-day festival. The festival celebration had complex laws and customs governing who did what and when. The most important days of Passover are the first (the day of sacrificing and eating the pascal lamb and remembering the night the Lord passed over the homes of his people—called a Seder meal) and the last. The seven-day festival of Unleavened Bread was a time of remembering the Jews' wandering in the wilderness and eating unleavened bread for 30 days. It was seven days long because Jews considered seven to be spiritually perfect. The celebration starts and ends with Sabbath celebrations, even if they don't fall on the scheduled Sabbath days. No work is done and the meals include the unleavened bread. I would assume that Jesus and his family would have tried to arrive to be on time for the first day and spent the rest of the week to be sure to be available for the Temple celebration on the last day. That's why I believe they stayed with Elizabeth when Jesus was young; probably on this occasion too. I really would love to have this detail written about.

With the population of Jerusalem swelling for the Passover celebration every room would be taken. In fact, tent cities cropped up outside of the city walls in order to accommodate such large crowds. If they did stay with Elizabeth and did so each year, then John the Baptist and Jesus would have spent a great deal of time together: at least a week every year for up to 12-25 years. But there's no evidence to support this belief. It makes sense to me for a number of reasons:

1. John baptized Jesus.
2. Some of John's followers became Jesus' apostles (Peter, Andrew, James and John, Matthew, at least).
3. When Herod beheaded John, many of his followers became Jesus' followers and continued to do so throughout their lives.

4. Elizabeth is probably related to Mary and we've talked about Mary's visit, about her helping during Elizabeth's delivery and about the possibility that Elizabeth helped Mary when she had Jesus.
5. All the gospels start Jesus' adult ministry with the baptism by John.

The other important detail of the story is that Jesus is 12. That was a significant milestone in the life of a Jewish child: he no longer was to be taught with the other children. At 12 he became an adult (today it is often 13) and was now a part of the adult activities in his religion. As a child Jesus would have been taught how to read Hebrew (maybe five days each week) and would learn about the Torah in the classes given in his town (probably by a Rabbi at the Synagogue). The Rabbi on the Sabbath would probably have read the Torah and “preached” in Aramaic because the women, some of the men and most of the children would not have learned Hebrew. Now that Jesus was an adult it would make sense for him to meet with adult males in the Temple. He no longer would be in the “children's” class or grouping. The surprise wasn't that he was meeting with the men, the surprise was that he stayed behind and that he was amazing the Rabbis and adults with his insight and questions. Why the surprise? Probably because he was a Galilean. Judaeans boys would have been well prepared to argue and discuss the Torah with temple leaders. I don't think the scene with Jesus is a unique occurrence. Maybe Jesus was also precocious, but Luke finds this worth mentioning because he is writing to a Gentile audience. I'm not sure Jewish readers would find this interesting or unusual.

Were Mary and Joseph derelict parents for not knowing Jesus was with them? There are a couple of reasons why I have always found that question amusing. Have any of you “lost” a child at a store, at a park, or in your neighborhood? I've been told that when I was two and three years old, I would go over to the next-door neighbor and tell them that my mom wouldn't feed me breakfast. Of course, they would fuss over me, feed the poor boy, and call my mom to come and get me. Maybe I wasn't lost, but kids aren't always where we expect them. What must Joseph and Mary have gone through when Jesus was missing for three days? Have any of you had similar experiences? We'll conclude this story next month.

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### “Christ in Our Home”

The devotional booklets for July through September are now available in the narthex. If you would like a copy of the booklet mailed to you, please call Nancy in the church office at 716-836-4868.

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### Coming in September!

“Harvest House of Buffalo—  
Diaper Drive”

and

**BW's BBQ**

**with Theme Basket Raffle and Craft Show**

**Saturday, September 7**

