



Pastor's Ponderings

"Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it."

Hebrews 13:1-2

Hospitality is a challenge... to open one's door to a stranger and maybe be confronted with something new, and something not of our prior experiences, and to learn and grow from these encounters.

How do we welcome the stranger today?

Hospitality is a giving ministry. Giving of our time, our listening ears, our compassion and sometimes shelving judgment for a time or forever. It is a process of opening-up and building relationships, and getting to know each person's story. Hospitality follows the golden rule, "in everything do to others as you would have them do to you" Matthew 7:12.

This is a basic value of our church, and we are being challenged to explore this value as we welcome people who are vulnerable in society, or different from us. This value helps us grow and live into the Word of God. The people we are being asked to welcome may be of different religions or from different countries as we work with refugees. The people may be folk who are disabled or challenged in some physical way. We have a committee that is exploring how we can be hospitable to members of the LGBTQI+ community. In all of these encounters we will grow and stretch, but will also benefit and be astounded at some of the people we meet, their stories, the challenges they face, and the gifts they bring.



I encourage all of us to take time to connect with God's diverse creations and in doing so we will be better off for it.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Fred he/him/his

New Member Invitation

On **Sunday, May 21**, we will hold a new member orientation class following our worship. All interested are invited to attend. We will be receiving new members on **May 28**, Pentecost.

Adult Ed. Classes led by Charlie Schmidtke Monday Afternoons at 1:00 PM Fireside Room and Zoom

All are welcome to join us in May for these classes! Please contact Charlie for a Zoom link.

- May 8 Examine how the bible was compiled and what is included
- May 15 Discuss the Council of Nicaea and how it defined who Jesus was

Table Talk

Wednesday, May 10, 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM
(in-church and on Zoom)



We'll meet in the Fireside Room to resume our discussions of spiritual beliefs and practices found throughout the world. Please contact the church office if you'd like the Zoom link.

Women's Luncheon Group

On **Thursday, May 11**, the group will meet for lunch at 12:30 PM at The Hideaway Grille. The restaurant is located at 399 Division Street in North Tonawanda. **If you need a ride from TOL**, or if you have any questions, please contact Judy or Barb. Everyone is welcome to join the group!



Coffee Hour

On **Sunday, May 21**, following the 11:00 AM Worship service, WWI will be hosting a coffee hour in the Fireside Room. All are welcome—hope to see you there!



Coming in June! Bible Study of 1st Corinthians

Join Pastor Fred at Augustana Lutheran Church for a four-week Bible Study of 1st Corinthians. The study will begin on **Friday, June 9** (from 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM). Everyone is welcome to attend. It will be hybrid, so if you would like the Zoom invite, please contact Pastor Fred.

BW's Chicken BBQ Coming to TOL!
Friday, June 16 (3:00 PM - 6:00 PM)
Drive-Thru Only!

Volunteers will be needed! Please let Earlene know if you are able to help. (No desserts for this event.)

Trinity Tidings, May 2023

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



ELCA Prayer Ventures, May 2023

- † Pray for an end to the invasion of Ukraine and for a lasting peace that will lead to rebuilding, renewal and hope-filled visions of the future for the people and communities of Ukraine and its neighboring countries.
- † Praise God that we are never alone or forgotten and that God is our comfort, courage and guide in every circumstance of life. “Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me” (Psalm 23:4).
- † Ask God to help us face hardships, perplexing problems and worries with faith that produces confidence, courage, wisdom and a resilient spirit.
- † Give thanks for the work of ELCA World Hunger and Lutheran Disaster Response, ministries of our church that gather our resources and combine them with those of domestic and global partners and companion churches to respond to our neighbors who have been impacted by hunger, poverty, injustice, and natural and human-caused disasters.
- † Ask God to help us discern our spiritual gifts – as individuals and as communities of faith – and where they are most needed in the church and the world.
- † Pray for people engaged in seasonal work, that they will have adequate housing, fair wages, safe work environments and supportive communities and congregations; promise to express recognition and gratitude for their hospitality, gifts and service.

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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.

Memorial Day Observed May 29



Armed Forces Day May 20

Trinity Tidings

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April Mission, Thank You

Thank you for your continued support of the Refugee and Immigrant Driver Education (RIDE) program at Augustana Lutheran Church in Tonawanda.

May Mission: Lutheran Charities of WNY (LCWNY)

The focus this month is LCWNY and the need for continued financial support from area congregations, businesses, foundations and agencies. Currently, sixteen local organizations receive grant funding from LCWNY, including the RIDE program at Augustana LC.

LCWNY History and Mission

“For over 40 years, Lutheran Charities’ primary mission has been to support Western New York communities with kindness, compassion, justice and generosity, joining people where they are with what they need.”

From: LCWNY website at www.wnylutherancharities.org.

One hundred percent of your donations support grant funding. To make a monetary donation, please use the marked envelopes found on the table in the narthex or use Tithe.ly through the TOL website. If using the mail, please enter “LCWNY” on the check memo.

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.



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). Gift cards should be mailed to the church office. Thank you!

“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.



Happy Mother’s Day! May 14



Lutheran World Relief Quilters (LWR) Group

After suspending their meetings in 2020, our quilters are once again gathering on **Thursday mornings at 9:00 AM** to work on assembling quilts.



LWR distributed its first quilts in 1945 to families in war-torn Europe following the Second World War. Within a decade, the ministry was reaching around the globe to villages far removed from the world's

attention. Today, an average of 300,000 quilts are lovingly given worldwide each year.

If anyone is interested in being a part of this group, please see Barb or stop in any Thursday morning.

No previous skill level is required!



What's Next: Here and Now / There and Then

So what does the next ten years bring?
What happens when we die?

We'll take the time and find the space
to explore what's next in our lives.

Adult Retreat—September 29, 30, and October 1

Lake Chautauqua Lutheran Center

Retreat Coordinator: Charlie Schmidtke

Retreat Schedule	
Friday, September 29	Gathering begins at 6:00 PM. Program begins at 6:30 PM, followed by socializing and fellowship; bring your own beverages and snacks.
Saturday, September 30	Breakfast at 8:30 AM. Programming throughout the day. Evening for socializing and fellowship.
Sunday, October 1	Breakfast at 8:30 AM, followed by program and worship. Depart by Noon.
Cost and Packages	
Option 1: Friday through Sunday (room for 2 nights and 4 meals):	
○ One person in a single room: \$183	
○ One person in double room: \$119	
Option 2: Friday through Saturday night or Saturday through Sunday (room for 1 night and 4 meals):	
○ One person in a single room: \$109	
○ One person in double room: \$77	
Option 3: Meals only: \$35	

Reservations Deadline: September 17

Contact Trinity Old Lutheran at 716-836-4868 or Charlie Schmidtke at 716-694-1335 or his email at schmidtkecharles@gmail.com.

Payment due by September 29. Make checks payable to Charles Schmidtke please. Information packets will be sent to everyone who registers.

A sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board.

“The Goodness Project”

We are very excited to announce TOL has been approved as a partner in The Goodness Project. Its vision lines up with ours in helping as many people as we can through community efforts. The website tells the inspiring story of Bill and Rachel Fletcher and how they started something out of nothing—except with the faith and determination—to feed the working poor and help their community (<https://thegoodnessproject.com>). Today there are five locations: Fort Worth, TX, Nashville, TN, Buffalo NY, Toronto, Canada and Israel.

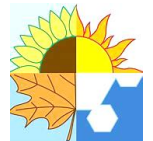
We can now go "shopping" for our church projects at the warehouse, 1500 Clinton Street in Buffalo, for items ranging from personal care items, non-perishable food, clothes, household goods, toys, furniture, office supplies and so many other things. The corporate partners are constantly sending trucks to replenish the items. The prices are very nominal and they have "box" specials that you can fill a whole box for a flat rate. The first time I went as a guest of another church and just walked around looking—I was amazed. We filled box after box of items that they used to make up holiday gift boxes for many families—and a little money went a long way.

Anyone interested in visiting The Goodness Project, please leave a message with Nancy in the church office and your name can be added to their list as a TOL shopper. Please keep in mind that the items purchased need to be used to further our outreach programs; for example, Sandwich Team Ministry/Friends of Night People, Food Pantry, and Operation Christmas Child.

Kathy

Seasons' Readings!

Stop by the TOL Book Sale happening in the Resource Room near the main bulletin board. Browse the many books and puzzles being offered at low, low prices!



If you are donating, please leave items in the box located in front of the desk. Thank you!

On-going Collections

Can Tabs...Place your tabs in the marked container in the narthex.

Recycle Cans and Bottles...Your donations can be placed in the container in the hallway off the narthex. You may also redeem them at Bottle and Can Redemption Center (2790 Sheridan Drive in Tonawanda). TOL has an account there.

Friends of Night People

- Collection of new men's socks, and small-size hygiene products (soap, shampoo, toothbrushes, toothpaste) or create care packages. See the marked container in the narthex.
- Men's seasonal clothing collection—look for the Big Blue Barrel near the main bulletin board.

Adult Ed. Classes with Charlie Schmidtke
Study Notes: “Who was the Real Jesus”

Part II: Matthew’s Nativity Story

Here’s a brief summary of Matthew’s nativity story.

- Chapter 1:1-17—Lists Jesus’ ancestors
- Chapter 1:18-24—Jesus’ birth: Joseph has a dream to wed Mary who was pregnant and name the child Emmanuel meaning “God is with us.” The birth just states that Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea.
- Chapter 2:1-12—Story of Wise men
- Chapter 2:13-23—Escape to Egypt; the killing of innocent children; and the family’s return from Egypt after Joseph has a dream. There are no details of the stay in Egypt nor for how long.

Neither Matthew nor Luke was there, so how did they get the information for their stories? Did Mary talk to them? Did she ever meet Luke or Paul (highly unlikely) or even Matthew? Why are their stories so different? There were 50-70 years of oral tradition before any of the gospels were written (Mark’s was probably the first). Matthew’s story covers over two years after the Nativity, while Luke is about eight days. In Matthew we see that Mary and Joseph settle in Bethlehem for at least a year. They have to escape to Egypt because of Herod. They were warned to escape in a dream of Joseph’s and warnings from the magi. In Luke after Jesus’ circumcision, they moved back to Nazareth. Did they go to Egypt like Matthew says or go directly home to Nazareth as Luke says?

Who was Matthew

His name was Levi. Jesus may have changed his name to Matthew (just like we have nicknames). Mark and Luke identify him as Levi. Or his name was Matthew and he was from the tribe of Levi (an important tribe in Judaism), so his nickname may have been Levi. He was a tax collector who would have been required to be fluent in Hebrew and Aramaic in order to communicate with others. He was probably from Capernaum (maybe he worked on import/export taxation).

Matthew is not mentioned after Pentecost but scholars believe he was martyred around 60 CE at Nadabah in Ethiopia. He may have been one of the followers who stayed in Jerusalem with Peter, James and John and maybe returned to Galilee now and then before going to Ethiopia. He may have been the brother of James the lesser, the apostle who was the son of Alphaeus. The Apostle Thaddaeus may also have been a brother to Matthew and/or James.

Who wrote Matthew? It was written in Greek and there is no indication that Matthew would have been fluent in Greek. So, it is most likely that disciples of Matthew wrote it and used his name for credibility. The Q document was a collection of Jesus’ speeches and parables and may have been the basis for all the Gospel

writers. We’ll look at the Q documents later. Some scholars believe that Matthew’s sermons or memoirs were the source for the Q document. Did Mark who wrote the first Gospel use the Q document? These are questions that are hotly debated among theologians and biblical scholars. I didn’t try to answer these questions in the class.

Matthew’s gospel passages focus upon non-Jews participating in the nativity story. The Magi were from another country, practiced a different religion, and represent gift giving to honor Jesus. The Epiphany was first celebrated in the Eastern Orthodox Church. Epiphany actually means manifestation or appearance. As with Saturnalia and December 25, the date of Epiphany, January 6, has its roots in a celebration of the Greek god of wine, Dionysius. Some of the practices became mixed with the Orthodox Church’s celebration. Epiphany became known as the 12th day of Christmas during the Post Reformation period. Originally it wasn’t even connected to the visit of the Magi; rather it focused upon the Incarnation—Jesus as God becoming a human.

The escape to Egypt connects Jesus to Moses and Jewish freedom. Jesus has come to save us just as Moses saved the Jews. Matthew says little about Jesus’ birth. Most of his narrative focuses upon the visit of the Magi. In Chapter 2:11, Matthew tells of the house they visited. Jesus was probably 18 months to two years old at the time. The passage about the slaughter of the innocents is an indicator of his age. So, Matthew clearly puts the Magi’s visit long after Jesus was born and tells us that the family is living in a home in Bethlehem.

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Operation Christmas Child

The suggested donations for May are soap, washcloths and band-aids. The soap and washcloths can be found in multipacks, which makes the purchase of these items even more helpful. If you can help by donating any of these items we would greatly appreciate it. These are things no one should have to live without and they are probably things we all take for granted.



Please place your items in the box marked “Operation Christmas Child” located in the narthex.

Thank you so much!
Kelly and Debbie

Ways to Give to TOL

Online: Tithe.ly is available. For instructions, please visit the church website at www.trinityoldlutheran.com or download the 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.