

# Trinity Tidings



The Mission of Trinity Old Lutheran Church is  
Proclamation, Fellowship and Service  
in the name of Jesus.

The Reverend Frederick W. Kopp  
Pastor

Volume 63

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Number 1

Trinity Old Lutheran Church is a member of the Niagara Frontier Conference of the Upstate New York Synod of the  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

## Pastor's Ponderings

*"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son,  
so that everyone who believes in him may not perish  
but may have eternal life." John 3:16*

I am stuck on LOVE at this time of year. It is one thing that is needed to move forward. With LOVE comes forgiveness and starting again, compassion and action, and hope and encouragement.

Jesus is LOVE and though the above statement seems to exclude some, LOVE never excludes, on the contrary it grows the more we LOVE.

For some LOVE may be a distant reality...the families who lost loved ones in the blizzard, or the people struggling with mental illness, or the homeless, hungry, and sick, or the people difficult to LOVE.

This year is a year to grow LOVE through our words and actions. By doing service, and giving of our time, talent, and treasure. LOVE helps people know someone cares, it's an action word!

*"Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God...God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another." 1 John 4:7-11*

In Christian Love,  
Pastor Fred he/him/his

*Love One Another*

Dear Folk,

Thank you for the prayers, concern, support, and gifts my family and I received this past year. You are a blessing to us.

Peace,  
Pastor Fred and Anne

## Update on Church Photo Directory! Deadline extended to Sunday, January 15

Due to the snowy weather in December, the deadline for submissions is extended. Please submit your photo via email to the church at [trinityoldlutheranchurch@gmail.com](mailto:trinityoldlutheranchurch@gmail.com) or submit one to the church office.

## Table Talk

**Wednesday, January 11, 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM**  
**(in church and on Zoom)**



As we begin a new year, we will continue to meet on the second Wednesday of each month. We will get a view of the spiritual beliefs and practices throughout the world as we watch Oprah Winfrey's "Belief" series. Over the last few months, we had interesting conversations on forgiveness, grief, addiction, regret and hope.

Please contact the church office if you'd like to Zoom. Each session stands alone so feel free to join in at any time.

## Annual Congregational Meeting / Report Submissions

The Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, March 5 following worship. Please submit Annual Reports to the church office by Sunday, February 19 (email: [trinityoldlutheran@gmail.com](mailto:trinityoldlutheran@gmail.com)).

## Congregational Budget Meeting

The 2023 Budget was passed at the meeting on Sunday, December 11. We also welcomed Sharon to the council and thanked current council members Judy and Lanny for agreeing to continue their service. Thank you to Dick for having served two terms on council and for continuing to serve as Financial Secretary.

## 2022 Financial Statements / 2023 Offering Envelopes

Your 2022 financial statements and 2023 offering envelopes are available in the narthex. Please stop by and pick up yours whenever you are in the church building (Sunday, or Tuesday to Friday, 9:00 AM to Noon). If you would like your financial statement mailed to you, please call Nancy in the church office (716-836-4868).

## Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Worship

With blizzard conditions, lake effect snows and resulting driving bans/restrictions, it was decided to have the services via Zoom only.



Thank you to Pastor Fred for delivering the Christmas Eve message and to Pastor Johanna for leading worship on Christmas Day.

On Sunday, January 1, Pastor Fred and Charlie Schmidtke presented their portrayals of Isaac and Aaron in "A Night to Remember." (It was originally planned for Christmas Eve.) Thank you to Diane Schmidtke as narrator, and to the voice and handbell choirs for adding beautiful Christmas music.

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



Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, <sup>2</sup>“Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East and have come to worship him.” Matthew 2:1-2

**Epiphany** Give thanks that, through Jesus Christ’s ministry, teaching and sacrifice, God reveals the vision, wisdom and values that help us live together as neighbors and children of God.

*From: ELCA Prayer Ventures, January 2023. ©Copyright & Trademark 2022 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. All Rights Reserved.*

**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.

**ELCA Prayer Ventures, January 2023**

**Martin Luther King Jr. Day** Remember in prayer the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and others who have gone before us in proclaiming all people to be children of God, deserving of freedom, equality, opportunity and respect. Pray that we will draw inspiration and courage from their lives, the word of God and our siblings in Christ as we work to right the injustices that continue in our nation and throughout the world.

Pray for an end to the war in Ukraine and for peace wherever there is conflict and violence in the world. Pray that the Spirit will sustain the faith, resilience and endurance of people impacted by war and conflict, and that we will persistently advocate for peace and provide relief and support to those suffering.

“O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!” (Psalm 8:1). Thank and acknowledge God, creator of all that exists and source of the grace, forgiveness, hope and new life we experience in Jesus Christ.

Ask the Spirit to give us the courage and determination to end gun violence in our nation, care for those who suffer its trauma and grief, and comfort and protect the children and youth who live with it in fear and anxiety.

Remember in prayer people who are without shelter; pray that they will find safe, dependable housing and that faith communities will respond to neighbors in need through temporary shelters, long-term housing, feeding ministries, and partnerships with social service agencies.

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**Trinity Tidings**

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**December Mission: Restoration Society, Inc. (RSI)**

Thank you for your donations to support the work of this important organization that is located in Buffalo.

**RSI's Mission:** “Illuminating pathways toward opportunity, possibility, wellness and independence.”

**RSI's Key Values:** Restoring Hope

*From: [www.rsiwny.org](http://www.rsiwny.org). ©2022 Restoration Society Inc.*

**January Mission: Lutheran Disaster Response  
Hurricane Ian Relief**

The focus will be on those in the Ft. Myers area recovering and rebuilding after the September 28 Category 5 hurricane.

“In response to Hurricane Ian, Lutheran Disaster Response is partnering with the Florida-Bahamas, Southeastern, North Carolina and South Carolina synods, as well as Lutheran Services Carolinas, to provide both immediate and long-term support. We anticipate relief will include water, food supplies, tarps, cleaning materials and other needs for those who have lost or damaged homes.”

*From the ELCA website at <https://www.elca.org>.  
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Please use the marked donation envelopes found on the table in the narthex or use Tithe.ly through the TOL website. If using the mail, please place “ELCA Disaster Response: Hurricane Ian Relief” on your 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. 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 | • Pasta, Mac-and-Cheese                              |
| • Peanut butter and jelly                                  | • Spaghetti and pasta sauces                         |
| • Cereal and other breakfast items (oatmeal, grits)        | • Instant potatoes                                   |
|  | • Paper products, feminine hygiene products          |
|  | Gift cards (Tops or Wegmans) (mail to church office) |

## Adult Ed. Classes led by Charlie Schmidtke Monday Afternoons at 1:00 PM

We will begin our 2023 classes on **January 16**, meeting in the TOL Fireside Room and also on Zoom. (Please contact Charlie for a Zoom link.) The updated schedule for 2023 is listed below. All are welcome to join us!



### 2023:

Jan. 16	Jesus the Galilean
Jan. 30	Was it the temple or the Mt. of Olives
Feb. 13	The Essenes' influence on Jesus
Feb. 27	Jesus according to Thomas and Judas
Mar. 20	The Armenian Jesus
Mar. 27	Jesus and Mary Magdalene
Apr. 10	What the Q documents tell us
Apr. 24	How the Gospels were selected and what was lost
May 8	The Council of Nicea and how Jesus was defined

### New Year — New Book — New Puzzle!

Start your new year off with a good book or challenging puzzle! Stop by the TOL book sale located in the Resource Library. There are many items available for all ages and new items are continually added.



### Ways to Give to TOL

Online: [Tithe.ly](https://tithe.ly) is available. For instructions, visit the church website at [www.trinityoldlutheran.com](http://www.trinityoldlutheran.com) or download the Tithe.ly app to your smartphone. If you have any questions, please call the church office (716-836-4868).  
Giving by mail: Please send your checks to the church and to the attention of the Financial Secretary.



### "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, prayer, hope and healing.

If you would like to reach out to her, she can be contacted through Augustana LC's office (716) 832-5720 or email at [augustchurch@yahoo.com](mailto:augustchurch@yahoo.com).



### ELCA Prayer Ventures, January 2023

"What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8). Pray that we will take to heart the prophet's explanation of what God calls us to do in the world.

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## 2022 Operation Christmas Child Update



Our boxes went to two countries—South Africa and Columbia. South Africa is on the southernmost tip of Africa and Columbia is the only country in South America to border the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans. Previously our boxes have gone to many countries around the world: 2021—Ecuador, Guatemala, Dominican Republic; 2020—Zambia, Columbia, Ghana; 2019—Togo; 2018—Ukraine; 2017—Kenya; 2016—Dominican Republic, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Peru; 2015—Uganda; 2014—Zimbabwe.

Amazing! We have really sent Jesus' love all around the world!! So many children have been loved by this ministry. A big thank you to everyone who has helped us make this happen throughout the years.

Keep watching the Tidings for items that will be featured for this year's boxes.

Thanks,  
*Debbie and Kelly*

### 2023, Operation Christmas Child

What a blessing it is to be a part of this wonderful outreach every year. We have really made it an important labor of love with our Sunday School class. Without the support from you we would not have been able to go above and beyond, and put together as many boxes as we did in 2022.

As the new year begins, please help us to continue our labor of love. A list of suggested donations for each month is included in this Tidings. A box labeled Operation Christmas Child is in the narthex for your donations.

Thank you so much for your help and support.

#### 2023 Operation Christmas Child

Jan.:	Toothbrushes, toothbrush covers, dental floss
Feb.:	Hats, mittens, gloves, scarves, socks
Mar.:	Combs, brushes, hair items, barrettes, small bag or drawstring backpack
Apr.:	Small toys (ball, slinky, jump rope, small cars/trucks, plastic animals, yo-yo, etc.)
May:	Soap, washcloths, Band-Aids
June:	Stuffed toys 10" or smaller, dolls, reusable plastic cups/water bottles
July:	School supplies, blue/black ink pens, pencils, pencil sharpeners, colored pencils, pencil case
Aug.:	Markers, small notebooks, safety scissors, glue sticks
Sept.:	Coloring books, crayons, watercolor paint sets
Oct.:	Children's books, puzzles, travel size games, flash cards

**Wishing everyone a Blessed and safe New Year!**

## Adult Ed. Classes with Charlie Schmidtke

### Study Notes: Islam

#### Part 4 – Islamic Beliefs II

The 5 Pillars of Islam are at the heart of the religion, regardless of sect.

**Testimony of Faith – *Shahadah*** (*oath to God*). There is only one true God and his name is Allah; Mohammad is His Last Prophet (Messenger). God demands faith out of gratitude for creating humanity. Faith is never based on any particular situation or need. A true Muslim is one who continually trusts in divine assistance and support, and does not wait until an emergency arises before seeking God. The Quran condemns hypocrisy and feigned belief. Faith is a person's dedication to God's will and the recognition of His sovereignty. The 5 Pillars are particular deeds and behaviors that are essential aspects of faith and are demanded by God of every Muslim.

**Prayer (*Salat*) 5x/day** – In prayer the person feels inner happiness, peace and comfort. It is wrong to pray only in time of need. It is proper to wash before praying (Muslims have a deep need for purity, both physically and spiritually). Prayers are given at dawn, noon, mid-afternoon, sunset and at night. Prayer mats are for purity—so as not to touch the dirt on the ground. The positions of prayer are part of the connection to Allah. The call to prayer from a human voice was started with Mohammad. He also began turning to Mecca to pray after receiving a revelation from Allah to do so. Mecca, thus, became the spiritual center for Islam. All prayers end with a reference to Abraham; the father of faith and the father of the Arab people. On Fridays at the mosques a sermon is given after prayer by the Imam. Praying in public and at a Mosque is a symbol of one's spiritual commitment to Allah.

**Almsgiving** – Hospitality is a fundamental characteristic of Arab culture and became a guiding principle for Mohammad. It's called Zakat; supporting the needy with your income. "All things belong to Allah; wealth is held by humans in trust for Him." The original meaning for Zakat was purification and growth. Almsgiving became a way to grow and purify one's self.

**Ramadan** – A time of fasting (***Sawm***) from dawn until sundown for the entire month: no food, water, smoking, drinking anything, no chewing anything or swallowing anything (including medications, unless they are given through a vein or muscle) or sexual relations. It is a form of physical and spiritual self-purification. Its purpose is to develop compassion for those who are hungry and a way to provide growth in one's spiritual life. If you break the fast, then you are to: (a) fast for 60 days; (b.) feed 60 people a day's worth of food; and (c.) give a charity meal to 60 other people. Fasting exceptions include those who are pregnant, menstruating or have recently delivered. The feeble old, children, the sick and the insane are exempt. Ramadan nights are joyful. Families and friends may gather for food, singing and entertainment. Some go to a mosque for a retreat. Ramadan celebrates the month the Quran first came to Mohammad. It is also the month of the Battle of *Badr*—Mohammad overcoming the Meccans.

**Hajj** – A Pilgrimage of self-renewal to Mecca at least once in a life time. It is a symbol for worldwide unity and equality. The Muslim religious calendar is a lunar-based calendar, which means Ramadan and the timing of the *Hajj* "drift" along the solar calendar. For the Muslims it means that they want to experience

these practices across the seasons and not be tied to the secular world's calendar. Clothing is uniform and white. The reason is to eliminate any sign of status, distinctions or importance. This practice is based on Mohammad's demand to treat everyone equally. In 630 Mohammad led his followers from Medina to Mecca and cleansed the Kaaba by destroying all the pagan idols surrounding it; then he consecrated the building to God. In 632 Mohammad made his *Hajj* with a large number of followers. He instructed them on the rites of the *Hajj*, which made the pilgrimage one of the 5 pillars. The Ritual is based on history and culture.

To begin the Hajj one goes into a spiritual state of holiness (***Ihram***). In this state people are prohibited from clipping nails, shaving any part of the body, having sexual relations, using perfumes, damaging plants, killing animals, getting married or carrying weapons.

The traditional rites of the Hajj include:

- a. Circle the Kaaba (***Tawaf***) 7 times counter-clockwise. People begin each circle by kissing or touching or pointing to the Black Stone and saying a prayer. People may drink water (to avoid dehydration) but no eating is allowed. This practice is based on an old Arab tradition of circling the Kaaba dating back to Abraham. Seven is a spiritual number which dates back to Pythagoras, a Greek mathematician and philosopher. He believed numbers have spiritual significance—7 is based on combining the natural world (4 directions) with the sacred (3 dimensions). The belief pervaded the ancient world. After completing the *Tawaf* people go to another part of the Mosque and pray. Traditionalists believe that the Kaaba was built by Adam after leaving the Garden. Most Muslims believe it was built by Abraham to be the house of worship for all humanity. The Kaaba is located inside the Al-Masjid al-Haram Mosque. This is the most sacred space in all of Islam. Facing Mecca is really facing the Kaaba. The Mosque was built around the Kaaba which literally means cube.
- b. Walking briskly 7 times between the hills of Safa and Marwah. This is a way of repeating Hagar's search for water when she and Ishmael were dismissed by Sarah and Abraham and exiled into the desert. She ran 7 times between the two hills, keeping an eye on Ishmael while also looking for signs of water. When she returned to Ishmael, the baby had scratched the ground with his leg and a water fountain sprang up beneath his foot. Abraham was commanded to build the Kaaba with Ishmael and invite people to make a pilgrimage to it.
- c. Drink from the Zamzam well.
- d. Go to the plains of Mount Arafat (12 miles east of Mecca) to stand vigil.
- e. Spend a night in the plain of Muzdalifa on the ground and under the sky. In the morning perform a symbolic stoning of the Devil by throwing 7 pebbles at 3 pillars. After the sacrifice of an animal (or voucher) the men either shave their beard or head and women trim the ends of their hair.