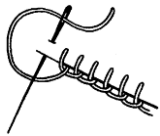




## Pastor's Ponderings

*"A Day hemmed in Prayer is less likely to unravel."*

This saying is written on a block of wood where I can see it daily. It reminds me that prayer is important and a needed helper that one can turn to and rely on when we are struggling, anxious, depressed, with challenges before us, and as we face roadblocks and circumstances of our own making.



It also is a springboard to the many passages on prayer in the Bible.

- + "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." *Thessalonians 5:16-18*
- + "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." *Philippians 4:6*
- + "The Lord is near to all who call, to all who call on the Lord in truth." *Psalms 145:18*

This month Lent begins, and a Lenten season hemmed in Prayer is less likely to unravel. Join me in getting out our needle and thread to keep our Lord sewn into the beginning, middle and end of our days.

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Fred he/him/his

## Sundays in Lent: Wandering with Peter

Like many of us, Peter has a wandering heart. His journey is not polished, or linear, or perfect, but he is always tethered to the love of God. When you look closely at Peter's story, you find Jesus at each step along the way—offering him abundance, catching him when he begins to sink, challenging him when he stands in the way, washing his feet, predicting his betrayal, and offering him agapē love.



This Lent, we're joining Peter in figuring out faith. We're not idolizing or vilifying him; instead, we're hoping to wander alongside him, open to what we might learn about Jesus (and ourselves) by stepping in his shoes.

Peace,  
Pastor Fred he/him/his

## Sermon Discussion/Input with Pastor Fred Wednesday, February 21 at Noon TOL Fireside Room

Pastor Fred invites everyone to join him in a bag lunch discussion of the texts for the next month of sermons. It is known as a "Pericope Study." Please let Pastor Fred know if you plan to attend so he can prepare materials.

## TOL Lenten Drive Begins Ash Wednesday, February 14



During the season of Lent to Easter, we will be collecting "new socks and underwear for men, women and children." Your donations will benefit Friends of Night People (men) and Harvest House (women and children). Underwear should be packaged.

Please place your donations in the marked container in the narthex. Thank you for your support.

## TOL's "Souper Bowl of Caring"

On **Sunday, February 11**, we have another opportunity to help fight hunger in our community through our support of the Good Shepherd Lutheran Food Pantry perishable and the Community of Good Neighbors Pantry.



Non-perishable food items can be placed in the narthex shopping cart. A soup pot will be available for monetary donations. Thank you for your continued support of this annual collection!



## Weather-Related Changes to TOL Activities

**Cancelled:** Valentine's Day Coffee Hour, Sunday, February 11

**Rescheduled:** Pizza Party on Sunday, February 18, in the Fellowship Hall following worship. Please use the new sign-up sheet posted on the main bulletin board if you can provide beverages or desserts. If you have any questions, please speak to Kelly. **All are welcome!**



## Mid-Week Lenten Soup Suppers and Worship Services

Below is the schedule of Wednesday Lenten soup suppers (6:00 PM) and worship services (6:30 PM) at TOL and area Lutheran churches.

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| Feb. 21  | Augustana Lutheran<br>(3143 Eggert Road, Tonawanda)           |
| Feb. 28  | Good Shepherd Lutheran<br>(2669 Sheridan Drive, Tonawanda)    |
| March 6  | St. Martin Lutheran<br>(322 Old Falls Blvd., North Tonawanda) |
| March 13 | Trinity Old Lutheran  |
| March 20 | Abiding Savior Lutheran<br>(1534 Ruie Road, North Tonawanda)  |

## Trinity Tidings, February 2024

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



**Ash Wednesday Services at TOL and Augustana LC**  
Wednesday, February 14 (in-church and on Zoom)  
Distribution of Ashes  
Augustana LC, 11:00 AM and TOL, 7:00 PM

### ELCA Prayer Ventures, February 2024

- † Be mindful of those in your community who lack safe shelter and adequate food. Pray that their needs will be met, and that God will use you and your congregation to meet them.
- † Remember in prayer those who suffer from heart disease, heart failure and congenital heart defects. Pray for the doctors, nurses, surgeons, care providers, researchers and chaplains who provide treatment, care and encouragement to patients of all ages and their families.
- † Pray for peace, healing and justice in places of conflict and violence, especially Ukraine, the Holy Land, Myanmar, Haiti, Venezuela and the Democratic Republic of Congo.
- † “The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary” (Isaiah 40:28). Who better to have at our side during every twist and turn in life than God, who is mighty, merciful and concerned for our well-being? Give praise and thanks to God!
- † Pray for the work of the ELCA Peace Not Walls campaign, which seeks a just and lasting resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and connects ELCA members with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, the Lutheran World Federation and ecumenical companions across the Middle East.
- † Give thanks for our global companions, whose daily realities, faith traditions, culture and language may differ from ours yet complement and enrich our lives and faith.
- † Pray that everything we do and say as people of faith will light the world, direct attention to our Creator and reflect God’s love for humanity and all creation.
- † Joy and sorrow are both intrinsic to being human. Pray that we might feel each of them as deeply, in the world and in our lives.

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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.

## Trinity Tidings

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Karen Mulartrick and Jan Sherman, Co-Editors



### February Mission: Hearts and Hands— Faith in Action (H&H)



H&H continues to serve Erie County and Western Niagara County adults ages 60+ and adults with disabilities.

“Our elderly neighbors are often lonely, isolated, and in need of friendly human interaction. In response to a recent community assessment and a national assessment from AARP, Hearts and Hands has designed our program to address social isolation through all three avenues of service: transportation, household supports, and companionship. Hearts and Hands volunteers may be the only people our care receivers see during a week, and their company is, in and of itself, a bright spot in daily life.

Hearts and Hands is a best-efforts program. Services are provided by volunteers who give their time as they have it available.”

For more details or information on how to volunteer, please visit the H&H website at [www.hnhcares.org](http://www.hnhcares.org). [Copyright @2022 Hearts & Hands. All rights reserved.]

Please use the marked envelopes found on the table in the narthex or use Tithe.ly through TOL’s website. If using the mail, please enter “Hearts & Hands” on the check memo.

### January Mission

Thank you for your donations to support ELCA World Hunger!

“Praise God for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ELCA World Hunger and the ways God continues to use our collective assets to impact the world and serve our neighbors in need.”

[From: ELCA Prayer Ventures, February 2024. © Copyright & Trademark 2024 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. All Rights Reserved.]



### Support for Local Food Pantries

Your donations of non-perishable goods to 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 them 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!

### Tai Chi returns on Monday, March 4

Please speak to Charlie if you are interested in signing up for Session 2. The group meets on Monday evenings from 6:30 PM to 7:30 PM. The cost is \$20 for the 10-week session. Dates are listed below.

March 4, 11, 18, 25 | April 8, 15, 22, 29 | May 6, 13



### Monday Afternoon Adult Ed. Classes, led by Charlie Schmidtke

Classes meet from 1:00 PM to 2:30 PM in the Fireside Room and on Zoom. Please contact Charlie for a Zoom link. All are welcome!

#### 2024

- February 5: Babylonian Captivity
- February 19: Last Supper
- March 4: Between Easter and Pentecost
- March 18: Pentecost
- April 8: The Great Compromise
- April 22: Gamiliel's Intervention
- May 6: Destruction of the Second Temple



### Operation Christmas Child News!

**Items for February:** Hats, mittens, gloves, scarves, and socks—these are the suggested donations for the month of February. Although we may think of some of these things from a winter point of view, there are also baseball hats, summer hats, visor hats, and work gloves for you to consider.

We also continue to request donations of yarn.

Any and all donations are greatly appreciated. Please place them in the box labeled Operation Christmas Child in the narthex. Thank you!!

**Shoebox Destinations:** We are happy to report that our boxes sent out in November went to the Dominican Republic and South Africa. How great it is that we can actually track where they made an impact!



**Update:** Just wanted to let you know that our 54 boxes were successfully delivered to two countries. Some of them went to the Dominican Republic, which is located in the Caribbean Sea. It occupies the eastern side of Hispaniola, the island it shares with Haiti. The rest of them were delivered to South Africa, which is a country in the southern portion of the continent.



A big thank you to everyone who helped make this possible. Jesus' love was spread all around the world. We are so happy to be part of this wonderful mission!

God Bless,  
Debbie and Kelly

### Photo Directory



The TOL Member & Friends Photo Directory was completed and made available in print and digital forms in September 2023.

A new church photo directory had been discussed many times over the years and is now a reality. The result is a professional directory in an easy to read format—complete with beautiful photos! Thank you to all who participated!

*Communications/Evangelism/Outreach Team*

### TOL Book Sale in the Resource Room

Put down your shovel and pick up a new book, magazine or puzzle and take a break from winter tasks! Take a look at what's available—and for very little cost. Your island getaway awaits you!



If shoveling is not your “thing,” maybe you have a closet or bookshelf that needs tidying up. If you have spare books or puzzles, please consider donating them. They can be left in the box located in front of the desk. Thank you.

### ELCA Prayer Ventures, February 2024

- † Pray that, during Lent, we will lean into God's grace and mercy with humility, trusting the promise that the suffering, death and resurrection of Christ win us a place in the kingdom of God.
- † “In my trials, Lord, walk with me; when my heart is almost breaking, Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me” (ELW 325). Lent reminds us of our frailty, suffering and loneliness and of God's love and forgiveness, found in the life, suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Breathe a sigh of relief and thank God.
- † Pray that we will not grow weary of serving our neighbors in need, both nearby and around the world. Ask the Spirit to renew us when we feel overwhelmed by human needs.

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### ELCA Prayer Ventures, February 2024

- † *Ash Wednesday* “Beware of practicing your righteousness before others in order to be seen by them” (Matthew 6:1). Reflect on who we are to God – fragile, imperfect beings and loved children who stand before God with humility and gratitude.
- † “Do you know someone celebrating a momentous occasion – a birth, an anniversary, recovery from illness or injury? Let their joy be your joy, and lift up prayers of thanksgiving to God.”

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### Ways to Give to TOL

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



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

*Aesop*



**Adult Ed. Classes with Charlie Schmidtke**  
**Study Notes: Coptic Beliefs**

**Part I: Background for Understanding the Coptic Church**

Culture, history, tradition, and teachings all influence people's beliefs into who Jesus was. We live in a "Western" Christian tradition, but there are other traditions with Christian beliefs. One starting point is to go back to the 1<sup>st</sup> century after Jesus rose and the Holy Spirit came on Pentecost. There were many Christian centers in that 1<sup>st</sup> century. These centers became the origin story for many different forms of Christianity.

1. Jerusalem: James (Jesus' brother) was the leader along with Peter and John. It was basically eliminated by the Romans in 70 CE during a war with the Jews, which led to the destruction of the Temple and the diaspora of the Jews from Galilee and Judea. Before its destruction it established the belief that followers of Jesus must follow Jewish laws and tradition, which included circumcision and following the laws of the Torah. (There are Messianic Christians today who follow this tradition.)
2. Alexandria: Mark (the Gospel writer) went to Egypt and established the Coptic Church, which we'll discuss later.
3. Antioch: This was a major city in the Roman Empire. It had a large, vibrant Jewish population. Paul, Barnabas, even Peter spent time there and created what became the Syriac Church. Its liturgy is in Aramaic and it follows the tradition of Thomas the apostle who went to Syria, then to India. The Council of Chalcedon in the 5<sup>th</sup> century condemned the liturgy and the belief that Jesus was only divine (an important belief in this church).
4. Rome became the center of the Roman Catholic tradition. Peter was considered to be the first pope. He was martyred in Rome and his successors have been called the Bishop of Rome or the Pope. This church adopted a Roman structure for governance and established Councils that met to determine what it meant to be a true Christian. For example, the Council of Nicaea met and wrote the Nicene Creed which became the basis for belief in this tradition.
5. Byzantium became Constantinople when Emperor Constantine conquered the eastern portion of the Roman Empire. Over time the Eastern Orthodox

Church split with Rome over language for faith and governance: Rome was centralized, and the East was decentralized. Since Rome was using revelation and theologians' writings over biblical sources, a number of the other centers of Christianity, including the Eastern Orthodox Church refused to join or stay and comply with Rome. The Great Schism became complete in 1054 when the Eastern Orthodox churches split from Rome. There were other breaks from the Roman Church, which occurred over the centuries, most notably the Protestant Reformation in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

6. Thomas (the apostle) went to India establishing the Chaldean Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East. We'll discuss this church in detail later.
7. Thaddaeus and Bartholomew were apostles who went to Armenia establishing the Armenian Apostolic Church. In 301 CE Armenia adopted Christianity as its official state religion. Thaddaeus came to Armenia and cured an official's daughter which led to his martyrdom. Bartholomew came later bringing a portrait of the Virgin Mary. He too was martyred. James, Jesus' brother, ordained the bishops who later went to Armenia, which means that all the priests in the church follow in what is called apostolic succession.

Disclaimer: I am presenting all the material in these classes as if it is true. I personally do not know how much of the material really happened or can be considered to be true. I do know that the material concerning the Coptic Church is considered the Truth for them.

*Used with permission.*

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**Annual Congregational Meeting**  
**Sunday, March 3, following Worship**  
**(preceded by a Potluck Luncheon)**

**"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).



