



Pastor's Ponderings

"Ho, everyone who thirsts,
come to the waters;
and you that have no money,
come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without price.
Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
and your labor for that which does not satisfy?
Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good,
and delight yourselves in rich food.
Incline your ear, and come to me;
listen, so that you may live."

Isaiah 55:1-3

I am reading a book called Listening for the Soul by Jean Stairs. It encourages counselors and people of God to take time to listen, learn, and live in the moment of a person's sharing and story. As the above text declares, we are called to listen carefully to God. Listening is mentioned over 250 times, with Jesus calling us often to this Holy Spirit activity.

What does soulful listening look like? It is an act of intentionality. It not only includes caring, using appropriate facial expressions and posture, posing open-ended questions, closely observing, understanding, confronting, and evaluating, but it requires listening for what the presence of God, God's voice is saying for a particular person.

Listening helps us bridge gaps, find common ground, and unveils for us purposes yet to be explored.

October can be a time of listening; for God's world is changing, God's people are seeking, and we are on a journey.

May God bless you and your hearing be strengthened.

Peace,
Pastor Fred he/him/his



TOL Voice Choir

The choir rehearses on Sunday mornings before worship at 9:30 AM. New members are always welcome to join in (all adults and teens)! If you are interested, please speak to Don Grabau or any of the choir members.



Friday Morning Bible Study in October

Pastor Fred's eight-week study of the Old Testament book Judges continues. Please join us on Friday mornings in October (**10:00 AM to 11:30 AM**). We meet in Luther Hall in the basement of Augustana LC. A Zoom option is also available for those unable to attend in person. Please ask Pastor Fred for the link. Come and share, learn, and grow! See you there.

Table Talk Wednesday, October 12



On the second Wednesday of the month from **6:30 to 8:00 PM**, we meet in the Fireside Room for Table Talk (also on Zoom—contact Charlie Schmidtke for the link).

This year's theme is "Belief," which is based on the acclaimed Oprah Winfrey series. The videos are about 15-20 minutes long and are followed by discussion. We'll be exploring varied ways that people around the world celebrate their spirituality and their search for meaning in this life and beyond. Each session stands alone so you can jump in and out when necessary.

In September's class we saw an evangelical Christian, an Indian-American Hindu and a Hasidic Jewish boy in Budapest making his Bar Mitzvah. These were very different views of the search for what gives meaning to our lives. We had interesting discussions as we saw similarities and differences in worship and religious practices and then shared some of our own stories.

I highly recommend that you join us at Table Talk—you will be amazed at the variety of customs and ways that people come together to find meaning and beauty around the world. We'll continue our exploration each month through May, 2023.

Diane S

Help Us Repair the Leaky Roof!



The roof over the Education Building needs to be repaired before winter sets in. Water damage to ceiling tiles has been occurring in the Resource Library room where the book sale is set up. If you are able to help defray the cost of the repair work, please use the marked envelopes on the table in the narthex, donate online at [Tithe.ly](https://tithe.ly) through the TOL website, or mail your check to the church office (indicate on the check that it is for Roof Repair). Thank you for your help!

"We can do no great things, only small things
with great love."

Mother Teresa

Worship With Us Every Sunday!

The Reverend Frederick Kopp, Pastor
Worship at 11:00 AM

Augustana Lutheran, Sunday Worship at 9:30 AM



Reformation Sunday, October 30

Combined worship at Augustana LC, and on Zoom,
9:30 AM.

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.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

ELCA Prayer Ventures, October 2022

Reformation Sunday We receive God's grace — undeserved love and forgiveness — through the gift of faith in the risen Christ, who restores our relationship with God. Give thanks for Martin Luther, for theologians and for siblings in Christ who inspire us to study Scripture, embrace God's gift of grace and salvation, deepen our faith and love for God, connect our faith with daily life and spread the good news of Jesus Christ.

Pray that we will respond generously to the immediate and long-term needs of people and communities impacted by flooding and wildfires, and that we will bear hope, encouragement and care to those grieving the loss of loved ones and neighbors and rebuilding their own lives.

Remember in prayer the people affected by catastrophic flooding in Pakistan over the past months — about 33 million people, including millions who have been displaced from their homes and communities.

Feast of Francis of Assisi (1181-1226) Pray that we will greet each day with a sense of awe, gratitude and respect for creation, for the organisms and creatures that inhabit the earth and for humanity in all its diversity and complexity — the handiwork of God. Ask the Spirit to inspire us to live with greater simplicity and to manage wisely all that God has entrusted to our care, use and enjoyment.

"Praise the Lord! I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart" (Psalm 111:1). Give thanks for God's trustworthy grace, activity in the world and daily blessings that renew and sustain us.

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Trinity Tidings

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September Mission... Thank you for your donations to support the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) organization. From the LIRS website at www.lirs.org (©2022 LIRS. All Rights Reserved):

"Our legacy of compassionate service has made a difference in the lives of hundreds of thousands of people who have found safety and hope in America's communities.

Our history reflects American Lutherans' deep immigrant roots and passionate commitment to welcoming newcomers, especially those who are most in need."

October Mission

The focus for October is Operation Christmas Child. The cost of shipping has increased to \$10/box. Your monetary donations, in addition to some of the basket raffle proceeds, will help offset the cost of completing and shipping the shoeboxes. (An updated article by Debbie and Kelly appears elsewhere in this issue.)

Please use the marked envelopes located in the narthex, or mail your donations to the church office (please indicate on your check that it is designated for Operation Christmas Child).

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 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).

- 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)

Hope and Healing: A Christian Cancer Support Group 4th Tuesday of each month from 3:00 to 4:00 PM Augustana Lutheran Church and on Zoom

I invite you, your family and friends for hope and healing to those who are in a cancer journey now. I invite those of you who have beat cancer for your help to give hope and healing to others. Please call me at 716-694-2451 or email me at lsokoley@hotmail.com that you will be attending. I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you.

Hope

Linda Sokoley

Thank You!

Chiavetta's BBQ / Basket Raffle Wrap-up

On Sunday, September 11, we hosted our annual Chiavetta's BBQ. Although there was no usual Bills football home opener going on, all the Bills' fans had smiles on their faces following our win on Thursday night!!!! We were able to have a "dine in" experience for our guests this year and it seemed like everyone had an enjoyable lunch. According to Scott last accounting, we made a reasonable profit—making the day's efforts a success!

Thank you so much to everyone who brought desserts (they were yummy!), to all our volunteers (couldn't do it without you!), and to everyone who participated in the lunch! A special thanks to Scott for being our "fearless leader"!

Earlene

Thank you to everyone who helped with our basket raffle. Whether it was with a donation or by purchasing tickets, we are extremely grateful. With your help, we were able to put together 60 items for a very successful raffle—that is the most we have ever had!!! We are also very happy to report that we made \$725.00!!! The money will be used for Operation Christmas Child, the Roof Fund, and the Heat Fund. Without your help that would not have been possible. Thank you again!!

Kelly and Debbie

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 or download the Tithe.ly app to your smartphone. Please call the church office if you have any questions (716-836-4868). Giving by mail: Please send your checks to the church and to the attention of the Financial Secretary.



Adult Ed. Classes led by Charlie Schmidthke 1:00 PM (TOL Fireside Room and Zoom)

We continue to look at who the "Real Jesus" may be through our review of some biblical passages but, for the most part, through sources and writings that are not included in the bible. For example, what the Coptic and Armenian churches teach about their beliefs in Jesus' childhood and life. We'll also delve into his childhood and young adult life from a variety of sources. For example, who was in his family (nuclear and extended) and what happened when he was 12? What do the other gospels and letters not included in the bible tell us about who He was?

2022:

- Oct. 10 The Bible's two different Nativity stories
- Oct. 24 Elizabeth/Mary and John/Jesus
- Nov. 7 Jesus' family and his Jewish roots
- Nov. 21 The Coptic stories of Jesus' childhood
- Dec. 5 The Gnostic stories of Jesus' childhood

2023:

- Jan. 16 Was it the Temple or Mount of Olives?
- Jan. 30 Jesus' young adulthood: Nazareth or India?
- Feb. 13 The Essenes' influence on Jesus
- Feb. 27 Jesus according to Thomas and Judas
- Mar. 13 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

Heidi's Hats

Many, many thanks to all of you who supported the battle against leukemia with a donation for a Heidi Hat. All money collected goes to Heidi's endowment for research. (Hats and Heidi's brochure are still available in the narthex.)



My heart sings when I see the hat on someone's head. Recently our granddaughter in NJ wore hers as she wished us well on our trip to the Netherlands. Then our Dutch friend, Peter, wore his while we were there.

In the years since Heidi's death many advances have been made in the treatment of leukemia. Our prayer is that no child in the near future will ever again suffer from this horrible disease.

Diane S

Thank You Letter from Hearts and Hands (excerpts)



Pastor Kopp,

Thank you for your congregation's generous support of Hearts and Hand's Faith in Action Campaign. The gift your community provided promotes neighbors helping neighbors ensuring older adults have access to affordable and reliable transportation, access to in home supports such as changing lightbulbs or air filters for them to remain independent. More recently, as we endure and continue to endure the ramifications of COVID-19 and the impact it has on social isolation among older adults, we're able to offer in home and virtual companionship services.

We THANK YOU for joining us in our mission to empower and enrich the lives of your community. *[Personal handwritten note: "Thank you for your leadership in the community!"]*

Peace,

Aaron Carlson
Executive Director

TOL is a part of this community of volunteers! For more program details and information (and how to become a volunteer), please visit the HNH website at www.hnhcares.org/services or call 716-406-8311.

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 on the table in the narthex.
- Men's seasonal clothing collection—look for the Big Blue Barrel near the main bulletin board.

ELCA Prayer Ventures, October 2022

Rejoice in the promise that God hears the cries of those who suffer injustice, inequality and persecution; pray for the Spirit to help us persist in our prayers for our neighbors in need and our endeavors to make our church, society, institutions and laws just, equitable, inclusive and compassionate.

Pray that our generosity will be driven by our desire to honor God, share the blessings and resources we have received, ease the burdens and suffering of neighbors in need, help others become self-sufficient, and strengthen communities.

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Adult Ed. Classes with Charlie Schmidtke Study Notes: Islam

Part I: Mohammad's Life

This is the first part in a review of Islam. We'll start with Mohammad's Life (born, 570AD – died, 632). His birth name was Mohammad ibn Abdullah. His family was poor and his father died before Mohammad was born. His mother gave him to a Bedouin tribe when he was a few months old and he lived nomadically for four years with a wet nurse to care for him when he was a baby. Where he lived there were no laws, no government and tribal justice was swift and harsh. He lived in desert land that was mountainous. Muslims call this time of his life his age of Ignorance. At the age of five he returned to his mother and stayed with her on a caravan. A year later he was orphaned and left at an oasis where his paternal grandfather came for him. At the age of eight, his grandfather died and Mohammad now went to live with an uncle, also in a caravan lifestyle. He traveled throughout Palestine, Mecca and Yemen. Mecca was a trading center in the middle of the desert.

When Mohammad was 21, he asked his uncle to marry his daughter (a common practice at that time). The uncle refused saying that Mohammad was an orphan, which was not suitable for his daughter. Instead, Mohammad married Khadijah, an older woman who asked him to marry her and help with her trading business. She was a widow and shrewd business woman. They were married 24 years and had four daughters (including Fatima). He became a respected businessman but had five problems that haunted him:

- He was unhappy with tribal inequalities.
- He was unhappy with the idea that wealth buys happiness.
- He hated the ill-treatment of the poor and marginalized.
- He struggled to find a meaning in life.
- He questioned the social morals and polytheistic religion of his time.

In 610 at the age of 40, he fell asleep while meditating in a cave near Hira. He woke up in terror and the angel Gabriel held him and told him that he would become God's messenger. Gabriel said "Read" and Mohammad said that he couldn't read. Again, the angel said "Read," and again he said that he can't read. For a third time the angel said "Read." This time Mohammad said "What shall I read." This encounter terrified him. He ran to his wife and asked her to protect him; she reassured and calmed him. She helped him reconcile his revelations with his own quest for fairness, equality, and respect. He received revelations for the rest of his life which were recitations directly given to him. These revelations became known as the Quran (sometimes written Koran). The Quran is about God's coming judgment of mankind; the end of the world; the last days when the dead will rise for God's last judgment; and a moral code for correct living. God demands moral behavior which should consist of generosity, awe, obedience, and gratitude. Basically, people are called to live a modest and sinless life.

The revelations were given through "wahy," which means they were auditory inspirations. The initial basic message was: "There is only one God, and Allah is his name." Mohammad was asked to accept faith in Allah freely and with informed consent. He was to surrender to Allah with no coercion or compulsion. He became a reformer and messenger. He was a prophet along with Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus. There was and continues to be a theological question concerning the source of the revelations. Mohammad was supposedly illiterate. If so, then who wrote the Quran? Mohammad or Allah using Mohammad through Gabriel. For Muslims God's miracle is found in the words of the Quran given directly to Mohammad. Insulting the Quran is insulting Allah.

The Quraysh (the leaders of his hometown of Mecca) opposed his message of fairness and equality and began persecution of his early followers who included his wife, Ali (his cousin) and Abu Bakr (his closest friend). He was a reformer and the Quraysh wanted no changes. His followers began being persecuted and humiliated. The Meccans shut his followers out of the trade business and demanded that Mohammad compromise with their belief in many gods. He refused and adopted a stoic non-violence attitude. His wife and uncle died within a couple of months of each other and his clan became violent toward him and his followers. His wife was his first and most ardent follower. She believed in him before he believed in himself.

In 620 the angel, Gabriel, lifted Mohammad onto a winged steed to fly to Jerusalem (called the Isra nad Mi'raj). He was offered water, milk and wine. He chose milk, which represented taking the middle path and avoiding extremes. (Water and wine represented extreme decisions.) In Jerusalem a celestial ladder appeared and he ascended through seven heavens and met Allah who spoke to him. He also met the other prophets (Adam, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus) and led them in prayer. This miraculous ride symbolized that he is the last and greatest prophet. He was brought back home and decided to turn away from tribal life because he now believes in universal equality. Two years later he avoids assassination and makes a pilgrimage to Medina. About 200 people went with him, including his friend, Abu Bakr. Medina was a wealthy oasis town and the name means City of the Prophet. Mohammad built a mosque in Medina that was and remains an open, peaceful place. It's a forum for praying, preaching and teaching. (Today the Mosque has been expanded and can hold 500,000 people at one time.) Christians came to pray (called with a bell); Jews came, called by a horn; and Mohammad's followers came with the calling of a human voice. In different ways this remains true today: bells are common in Christian churches; a horn is used during Rosh Hashanah for the Jews; and Moslems are called to prayer throughout the world with the human voice. The first caller for Mohammad was an African slave.

