



## February Adult Ed. Opportunities at TOL and Augustana (in-church and on Zoom)

(complete details and discussion topics are found  
elsewhere in this issue)

**Charlie Schmidtke's Monday Afternoon Classes**  
(The Study of Islam), 1:00 PM

**Table Talk...** hosted by Pastor Fred and Charlie  
Schmidtke (the second Wednesday of every month,  
6:30 PM)

## New! Lenten Journey, Begins February 18

You are invited to join Pastor Fred and the group for an  
eight-week Lenten Journey beginning Friday, February 18  
at Augustana Lutheran (10:00 AM to 11:30 AM).



A Zoom invitation will be offered for  
those who can't make it in person. Hope  
you can join them!



## TOL Church Office News

### Items for the Worship Bulletins:

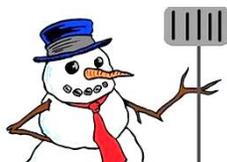
All items for the Sunday bulletins should be submitted to  
the church office by **9:00 AM on Wednesdays**. Thank you!

### New Email Address for TOL is:

[trinityoldlutheranchurch@gmail.com](mailto:trinityoldlutheranchurch@gmail.com).

### Annual Meeting Reminders:

- Annual Congregational Meeting, **Sunday**, March 6
- Annual Report submissions **deadline, Sunday, February 20** (please email the church office)



To everyone who helped shovel  
snow and clear sidewalks for our  
members, guests and  
community partners—  
**Thank You!!**

**NOTE:** As we went to print, the visioning session  
was held as scheduled on Saturday, February 5.  
Below is the letter of invitation received from  
The Reverend Jeremiah Smith, our Conference Dean.



Visioning Session at TOL  
Saturday, February 5  
10:00 AM to Noon

Greetings Trinity Old Lutheran,

My name is Jeremiah, I serve as Pastor of Parkside  
Lutheran in North Buffalo and I also have the privilege of  
serving as the Conference Dean. I am delighted to have  
been invited to spend some time with all of you to  
prayerfully discern what the future holds for Trinity Old  
Lutheran. During our time together we will reflect on two  
questions:

What does God desire?  
What do we have to offer?

As communities of faith prepare for a post pandemic  
world, now is the time to assess how God has equipped us  
to carry out God's vision. God has a dream and a plan for a  
world that looks different than our current lived reality.  
The Holy Spirit is calling you and your congregation to  
continue to make a difference. Together we will explore  
how TOL is already having an impact and what new  
opportunities we have to serve God. I hope you can join  
me on February 5<sup>th</sup> for a morning of prayer, bible study,  
and interactive activities to help us dream. Your voice is  
needed and your perspective matters.

Yours in Christ,  
Rev. Jeremiah P. Smith  
Dean of the Niagara Frontier Conference

## ELCA Prayer Ventures, February 2022

Reflect on what God is stirring in us right now, and  
pray that we might discern what God calls us to be:  
bearers of love, hope, healing, reconciliation and the good  
news of Jesus Christ.



## 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.

### In-church Worship Guidelines (February 2022)

We welcome you to join us for in-church worship! In keeping with the Covid guidelines set by Erie County and New York State. We ask that people continue to wear masks all the time while in Trinity Old Lutheran. Also, please continue to keep in “bubbles” and maintain six foot distances when relating to others.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation in support of TOL ministries.

*Pastor Fred and the TOL Opening Committee*

### Ways to Give to TOL

**Online:** [Tithe.ly](https://www.tithe.ly) is available by visiting the TOL website at [www.trinityoldlutheran.com](http://www.trinityoldlutheran.com) (also with instructions), or by downloading the [Tiithe.ly](https://www.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.



### ELCA Prayer Ventures

**February 20:** “Love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as [God] is merciful” (Luke 6:35-36). Ask the Spirit to help us do what seems difficult or impossible and live as willing disciples of Christ.

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### Hope and Healing: A Christian Cancer Support Group

**4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month (3:00 to 4:00 PM)  
Augustana Lutheran Church and on Zoom**

I invite you and 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 in giving hope and healing to others. Please let me know that you will be attending (phone 716-694-2451 or email me at [lsokoley@hotmail.com](mailto:lsokoley@hotmail.com)). I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you.

hope

*Linda Sokoley*

## Trinity Tidings

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Karen Mulartrick and Jan Sherman, Co-Editors



### January Mission: Thank You

Thank you for your donations to ELCA Disaster Response—US Tornadoes. They will be used entirely (100%) to assist those affected by last December’s tornadoes. As always, the ELCA remains involved until the response is complete.



### February Mission: Hearts & Hands (H&H)

Our focus this month is H&H of which TOL is a part of the community of volunteers. This Neighbor-Helping-Neighbor program has been serving caregivers and care receivers in Erie and Niagara Counties since 2003. In addition to needing volunteers, monetary donations are most welcome and will help with expenses incurred by volunteers transporting care receivers to medical appointments, routine errands, etc., as well as caregiver support services.

Please visit the website at [www.hnhcares.org](http://www.hnhcares.org). You will find more detailed information about H&H and its services and connections to local agencies that support caregivers. The agency can also be contacted by phone (716-406-8311).

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 “Hearts & Hands” on the check memo.

### “Souper Bowl” Sunday, February 13

Your donations for this annual TOL food drive are most welcome and appreciated! The following are ways that you can help.



- Non-perishable items should be placed in the narthex shopping cart or in the marked boxes at the elevator entrance during the week (Mondays – Fridays, 9:00 AM to 12:00 Noon). **Gift Card donations from Tops and Wegmans stores** can be mailed to the church office.
- **Monetary donations** should be mailed to the church office (indicate that it is for “Souper Bowl Sunday”).
- **Donate online** through [Tithe.ly](https://www.tithe.ly) (TOL website at [trinityoldlutheran.com](http://trinityoldlutheran.com))

**Thank you for your “souper support”!**

**Monday Afternoon Adult Ed. with Charlie Schmidtko**  
**1:00 PM in the Fireside Room and on Zoom**

We will continue our investigation of world religions. Hope you can join us for any or all of the classes! (Please contact Charlie if you would like a Zoom invitation.)



Islam

- February 14: Who was the real Mohammad?
- February 28: What are the five Pillars and primary beliefs of Islam?
- March 14: Examining the different sects within Islam.

Native American

- March 28: Mayan beliefs and practices.
- April 4: The Hopi view of life's sacredness.

African Tribal

- April 25: General beliefs of sub-Saharan tribes.

Aboriginal

- May 9: The sacred meaning of a "walkabout."

Conclusion

- May 23: Discussing the causes and effects of religious intolerance.

**Table Talk at TOL—Second Wednesday of the Month**  
**6:30 PM in the Fireside Room and on Zoom**

Pastor Fred and Charlie co-host Table Talk. The next two sessions will continue to focus on Charlie's book for discussion topics (reading the book is not necessary). Please contact Charlie if you would like a Zoom invitation.

- February 9: Discussing the beauty and the challenges of respecting others.
- March 9: Sharing examples of respecting family.
- April 13: Holy Week—What does the Last Supper and Resurrection mean to you?
- May 11: Why do bad things happen to good people?

**TOL Book Sale**

Take a break from outdoor winter tasks and make time to relax and enjoy a good book. There are many titles and subjects to choose from (for adults and children). Or maybe relax with a new puzzle—there's an interesting selection available. We also have new items and we invite you to bring in your donations



Please stop by the Book Sale located in Room 103 after worship—or anytime you visit TOL!



**President's Day,**  
**February 21**



**Snow Saga**

Twenty-plus inches of ice cold snow  
Have livened up our space  
Not much fun, as you well know  
If it freezes your hands and your face.

We are lucky to have a next door guy  
Who plows us without an "ask"  
Monday he did our sidewalk and drive  
But left walkway to be our task.

"No problem", said I at eleven pm  
As I considered the paper and mail-  
We wouldn't receive either of them  
On the 'morrow without a clear trail!

On with the boots and gloves in their pairs  
And outside feeling quite resolute...  
Snow up to my knees on porch and on stairs  
Not long before I'm thinking, "Oh, shoot!"

I expected to take 10 minutes or so-  
A path to the driveway I'd blaze  
But I didn't consider the weight of the snow  
Not long before I knew I was crazed!

The night it was lovely, shimmery and still  
Nary a breeze to add to the test  
But my age: it overcame my will  
I was forced to give up and rest.

So the job is only halfway done  
Tomorrow is another day  
Then Charlie will plow and have his fun  
Hope no more snow comes our way!

*Diane S*

*Used with permission.*

**Operation Christmas Child**



**Update:** The remaining boxes went to Ecuador, which is located on the equator in South America's west coast between Columbia and Peru **and** to Guatemala, which is located in Central America between Mexico to the north, Belize to the east and Honduras and El Salvador to the southeast. It touches both the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans.

Please continue to support this outreach project with your prayers and collection of items for this year's boxes. Thanks!

God Bless,  
*Debbie and Kelly*

**Suggested items for February** are hats, mittens, scarves, and socks. Brrr—what perfect items for this month!



Is knitting or crocheting a favorite hobby of yours? Do you have extra yarn you don't know what to do with? How about using that special talent and yarn to knit/crochet a few items?! All donations, store bought or hand-made, are truly appreciated.

## Adult Ed. Classes with Charlie Schmidtke—Study Notes

The following is the first of three essays from previous classes dealing with Buddhism. [Note: All are invited to attend the 2022 Adult Ed. classes either in-church or on Zoom. See the schedule that appears elsewhere in this issue.]

### Buddhism—Part I

We began with Siddhartha Gautama, an Indian prince who would become The Buddha. He lived sometime between 563-400 BC. This period in history also included: 1) the Babylonian Captivity when Mosaic laws, practices and the Torah became the Jewish identity; 2) Lao-Tzu, one of the great writers of Daoism; 3) Zoroaster, the great prophet from Persia (the Magi who visited Jesus were Zoroastrians); 4) Socrates, whose philosophy became the basis for Paul's ideas, as well as St. Augustine's (Luther's theological inspiration); and 5) the development of Mayan cities and religion.

Siddhartha was born in southern Nepal (Northeast India), in Lumbini. There are a number of stories of his birth but they change from culture to culture, such as in Tibet, Nepal, India, China, Japan (countries with the largest Buddhist populations). Here's the Nepal story: His mother was the queen of a small kingdom and had a dream before he was born. In it a white elephant offered her a lotus flower, then he entered her body. Thus, Siddhartha was a virgin birth (like Jesus). The dream meant that the child would either be a great ruler or a holy man. At birth the baby emerged from her side and she died seven days later. Siddhartha was raised by his aunt, and his mother's death signaled the inevitability of suffering, which became his obsession throughout his adult life.

The first written accounts of his life occurred about 500 years after he died. Like Judaism and Christianity, there was an oral tradition before any holy books were written. His followers memorized his teachings and sayings, passing them from generation to generation, and finally writing them down. Historical facts about his life are riddled with uncertainty but his message touches something we all know—suffering is inevitable. "He who sees me sees the Teaching: he who sees the Teaching sees me." Until he was about 30, he lived the life of a prince. His father shielded him from the outside world and all its sorrows and sufferings, because he did not want those forces to inspire Siddhartha to be a teacher. His father expected him to conquer all 16 kingdoms in India because of his wife's dream. Thus, he led a life of no pain, only pleasure.

At 16 he was married to a cousin selected by his father (all marriages were arranged), followed by a ten-year honeymoon. His life began to change at age 29. He was close to his charioteer and asked him to help him sneak outside. When outside, his life and the religious history of the world changed forever. Away from the confines of the palace, he had four transforming encounters: 1) He saw an old man and saw that life was an inevitable and continuous process of change; 2) Next he saw a sick man and his charioteer tells him that everyone gets sick; 3) He saw a corpse and recognized that death and change were inevitable. After seeing the corpse, he was shocked and said "I too will age, get sick and die." He was confronted with these universal questions: suffering is inevitable and why do we get sick, suffer, grow old and die? He found no ready answers and he desired to know the truth about life and death; and 4) On his fourth venture he looked into the eyes of a mendicant holy man and wished to become a spiritual seeker and get out of this life of inevitable change.

In order to become a Buddha, a teacher, Siddhartha felt he needed to suffer at a primitive level. So, he decided to leave the palace to understand suffering. While he was deciding when to leave, his wife gave birth to their son, whom he named

Fetter, meaning "he will be a ball and chain for me." Despite the birth, he and the charioteer left the palace. Siddhartha decided not to pick up his son or tell his wife because it would be too painful. He left without a word or note.

After leaving the palace he confronted Mara, the temptress. "Go back and you will be a great leader." He ignored her. At this moment he was abandoning his role as a prince and left his wife and child because he believed in order to gain anything, he must lose everything first. He went to the Ganges River and became a beggar. He slept in the forest and decided he was a SEEKER trying to solve the problem of suffering. He believed that Vedic Hinduism—his religion—was too ritualistic in its chanting. For him it felt too superficial and insufficient to bring peace and honor to the gods. He thought that the followers were focusing more on the rituals than they were the gods. Throughout India there was a general dissatisfaction with religious practices throughout his lifetime. Siddhartha was brought up in a time when Hinduism was breaking into different beliefs and practices. Like Jesus, he wasn't preaching the need for a new religion; rather, both provided us with a way of finding peace or salvation that was different from the religions of their childhood.

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### ELCA Prayer Ventures, February 2022



**Black History Month** Give thanks for the gifts, accomplishments, influence and witness of our African-descent neighbors — we stand together as siblings in Christ and partners in the gospel, doing God's work in the world together. Pray that God will guide our church as it strives for racial justice, socioeconomic equity, racial reconciliation and an end to racism in our church, society and institutions.

Pray that our anxieties about the future will be quieted by the assurance that the Spirit's gifts of hope and peace are more powerful and enduring than the threats and uncertainties we face in life.

Pray for immigrants and refugees, in our country and around the world, who seek safety, relief and a place to rebuild their lives. Ask that God's compassion, wisdom and desire for justice guide us in resolving the problems and crises that displace people from their homes and nations.

Thank God for hearing and responding to our prayers — spoken and silent — and for tending to our needs, easing our worries, calming our anger and providing refuge in time of trouble. Ask the Spirit to guide and inspire us as we do God's work in the world, caring for our neighbors in distress.

Look into the vast night sky at the stars, planets, meteors and comets, and praise God for stirring our awe, wonder, curiosity, humility and imagination.

Give thanks for the evolving technology that helps us with everyday tasks, connects us with people around the world, provides new tools for treating the sick and injured, and helps us reach more people with the gospel. Pray that we will consider the impact of technology and use it equitably and justly for the well-being and benefit of all people.

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