



Pastor's Ponderings

⁷"for we walk by faith and not by sight."
2 Corinthians 5:7

This quote from Paul comes after several verses in which he writes that our earthly body will be destroyed, yet we will be given a building from God, a heavenly dwelling. Paul also said in 2 Corinthians 4:16 that "even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day."

Maybe recently, I have been focusing on quotes like these because I feel outwardly older than I have ever felt. This could be because of my broken fibula, my gray beard, or what seems like most drivers on the road, other than me, look like they are in high school!

I may also be drawn to these quotes because I am thinking of some of my faith mentors who walked by faith. Whatever the reason, having my inner nature be renewed every day is powerful and rejuvenating. When I think about a day-to-day renewal, my thoughts seem crisper, my eyes more aware and my ears ready to hear the "now" of the day. Day-to-day renewal helps me hear God's message anew with an open heart that no longer feels old!

I invite you to join me in a personal renewal of faith that opens up God's word to new possibilities and actions to consider.

NOT old inside, I remain...
Pastor Fred he/him/his

Sermon Discussion/Input with Pastor Fred Wednesday, May 22, at Noon TOL Fireside Room

"Pericope Study" with Pastor Fred: You are invited to join him in a bag-lunch discussion of the texts for the next month of sermons. Please let him know if you plan to attend so he can prepare materials.

Monday Afternoon Adult Ed. led by Charlie Schmidtk

The class will meet in the Fireside Room and on Zoom on **Monday, May 6, from 1:00 PM to 2:30 PM.** The topic will be "Destruction of the Temple." Please contact Charlie for a Zoom link. All are welcome!



RIDE Challenge—we're halfway there!

We are in the second month of our goal to raise \$650.00—enough money to assist one refugee or immigrant in getting a NYS driver's license. This will help the RIDE client get to work, take family to places, and go to required classes including English. Thank you for your giving!

Quilting Group Updates!

On Sunday, April 21, the congregation took part in the blessing of the beautiful quilts that will be sent to Lutheran World Relief and also given to several members and to those in need locally. The quilts on display were lovingly created by quilters from TOL and Augustana LC.

The group will not meet in May or during the summer—but will gather again in Fall.

PIZZA Mark your calendars for **Sunday, May 19.** We will be having a pizza lunch in the Fellowship Hall following the 11:00 AM worship service. All are welcome to come and enjoy some tasty pizza and fellowship with your Church family!

Please use the sign-up sheet on the main bulletin board.

Hope to see you there!
Kelly

Men's Breakfast: Saturday, May 18

We will meet on **Saturday, May 18, at 9:30 AM** in the Fellowship Hall. Breakfast will be provided, with a freewill offering to be collected.

We also hope to meet on the third Saturdays in September and November.

Please use the sign-up sheet on the main bulletin board.

Lanny and Peter



WWI "Choose Your Craft" Night

All women are invited to a double-header craft night on **Thursday, May 23 at 7:00 PM.** Learn how to make Job's Tears necklaces with Diane or greeting cards with Nancy. Pick one or do both—it's sure to be a fun evening!

Please use the sign-up sheet on the main bulletin board.

Kelly



"No act of kindness, no matter how small,
is ever wasted."--Aesop

Trinity Tidings, May 2024

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



ELCA Prayer Ventures, May 2024

- † *National Day of Prayer [May 2]* Join with our siblings in Christ in praying for the well-being of the church, our neighbors in need and the leaders of our communities and nation. Ask God to help us resolve the problems and issues that keep us from thriving in unity.
- † Give thanks for the creative gifts of church musicians and music ministry leaders, who enrich the worship experience in our congregations and help us express to God our joy, concerns and praise.
- † Remember in prayer our neighbors in Haiti, who yearn for peace, safety and hope amid persistent suffering and violence. Ask the Spirit to guide us as unwavering advocates for the peace and relief of our neighbors and siblings in Christ.
- † *Day of Pentecost [May 19]* Praise God for the work of the Spirit, which calls us to faith, focuses and strengthens us, accompanies us in our baptismal journeys and unites us in a diverse, global community of siblings in Christ.
- † Pray that our love for God will move us to seek God's ways, wisdom and Commandments, which exist for the benefit of all humanity.

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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.

“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.



Memorial Day, Observed May 27



Happy Mother's Day, May 12

Trinity Tidings

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May Mission—RIDE Program at Augustana Lutheran!

The RIDE Challenge will continue through May. Please see the article on the front page.

For your monetary donations, please use the marked envelopes found on the table in the narthex or use [Tithe.ly](https://tithely.com) through the TOL website. If using the mail, please enter “RIDE” on the check memo.

April Mission—Thank You

Thank you for your continued support of the RIDE program at Augustana LC.

[RIDE Update by Johanna Andritz, Augustana LC Newsletter, April/May 2024, “Thank you for helping so many immigrants and refugees learn to drive so that they can go to school, go to work, go to the grocery store, pick up their children, take their children to appointments and activities and so much more!”]



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 include:

- 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)

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!

Operation Christmas Child

The suggested donations for the month of May are soap, washcloths and band-aids. These much-needed items are great to buy in multipacks. We also continue to collect yarn.

Your donations for this Sunday School outreach project are greatly appreciated! Please place your donations in the box marked Operation Christmas Child located in the narthex.

Thank you!
Kelly and Debbie

Pastor's Report, 2023 (excerpts from the TOL Annual Report, April 7, 2024)

"His greatest Commandment is Love."
(Matthew 22:36-40)

"Love is the focus of who we are and where we are going at TOL. **Love** is the center of our worship, prayers, and service to others. When we **love** we are following Jesus' command."

"Being centered around worship, we experienced praise and thanksgiving, support and strength, conviction and absolution. We thank God for **loving** us by sending us Jesus. We are promised Jesus' presence when we meet and worship."

"I attended the synod assembly this year and we continue to **Love** others and to look beyond ourselves with support for Global Refuge, the new name for Lutheran Refugee and Immigration Service, Lutheran Disaster Response, and Lutheran World Hunger."

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Fred

- "Taking care of property is a constant job." "We are blessed to be able to share our space with community partners."
- Our children's education program meets once a month and stresses the commandment to Love the Lord with all your heart, soul, mind and strength.
- Adult educational opportunities include Monday afternoon classes, an evening Table Talk, bible studies, and a monthly Pericope study.
- Our Council leads us and supports the ministries happening from our teams/committees.
- "Service is the heart of Loving our neighbor." Our Communications/Evangelism/Outreach Team, Sunday School, various Missions of the Month, Operation Christmas Child, Lutheran Charities of WNY, Sandwich Ministry to support Friends of Night People, and numerous collections for Good Shepherd Food Pantry, Ronald McDonald House convey our love.
- Our Finances and Administration are handled smoothly; we thank friends and members for their weekly giving and response to two additional requests during the year.
- Our RIC (Reconciling in Christ) Team is exploring ways we can be more welcoming to our neighbors, LGBTQI+ individuals and their families.
- The Council affirmed support of Pastor Sohail's start-up of a South Asian Worship community that will be based out of TOL.



Overwhelming response! -Thank you for your generous donations of egg cartons for the St. Paul Lutheran Church project. We have completed our collecting.

Ways to Give to TOL

Online: [Tithe.ly](https://www.trinityoldlutheran.com) is available. For instructions, please visit the church website at www.trinityoldlutheran.com or download the [Tithe.ly](https://www.trinityoldlutheran.com) 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.



Adult Retreat

October 4, 5 & 6

Lake Chautauqua Lutheran Center
Retreat Coordinator: Charlie Schmidtke

"Who am I?"

Am I the same person I was 30 years ago?
Does our personality change as we get older
How have I become the person I am?

These and other questions will be raised during our time together.

The Retreat begins on Friday evening, October 4; gathering at 6:00 PM; program begins at 6:30 PM followed by a time for socializing and fellowship.

Saturday begins with breakfast at 8:30 AM followed by the day's program and activities; ending with socializing and fellowship in the evening.

Sunday begins with breakfast at 8:30 AM followed by the program and worship. Departure at noon.

Three packages/costs are available. Full details will be in the June *Trinity Tidings*, and also posted on the main bulletin board. If you have any questions, please speak to Charlie.

ECLIPSE

I watched, I waited
I anticipated.
I hoped, I coped
I even moped...

But there was no doing
Or even undoing
Since right at the core-
Science gives us much more!

We can mumble or grumble
But it pays to be humble
And to go with the flow
And say yes to the glow...

The clouds parted ways to give us a gaze
In the sky, in the maze
I saw orange
Like a blaze

And then came the chill
And the lone whip-o-will
And my world became dark
And ever so still...

What a lift! What a gift!
What a blessing to see
There must be a message
In totality!!

Out of the nothing
In comes the something

Oh, what a sight
To come back to the light!

Diane S

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

Part IV: The Family's Journey through Egypt (continued)

7. Heliopolis (10 kms from Cairo). It was home to a large Jewish community with the Synagogue of Unias. Nearby was Mary's Tree where the family rested in the tree's shade. The same tree exists today. Jesus caused water to flow from a spring from which they drank and washed their clothes. Mary poured some water on the ground and a fragrant balsam plant blossomed. It provided a healing balm and perfumes. Tradition says that the balsam had been planted by Augustus Caesar but remained unproductive until Mary poured the water from the stream Jesus had created.
8. Cairo. There are landmarks and a Coptic heritage path to follow. The landmarks include dozens of churches, convents, and St. Mark's Cathedral. As Jesus began entering Cairo, idols began to fall and the Governor was incensed. He sought to kill Jesus but the family took shelter in a cave where a church now stands. Jesus also caused another well to emerge for them, which remains today.
9. Maadi. A suburb of Cairo was the site where they embarked on a sail boat to head south. There was a synagogue there and Joseph became acquainted with some sailors who offered to sail them south. Today the site is the Virgin's Church of the Ferry. In 1976 at the stone steps the family used to enter the boat, a bible came from "somewhere" and lapped onto the steps. It was open to the page of Isaiah 19:25, "Blessed be Egypt my people."
10. Deir Al-Garnous is a village where the family docked. There is a deep well believed to provide water for the family. This is the home of the Church of the Virgin.
11. Gabal El-Tair (Bird Mountain). The family rested in a local cave that is now the site of a church and the Monastery of the Virgin Mary. While they were there a large rock fell and Jesus held out his hand and protected the family. The imprint of his hand still exists in the rock. As they proceeded back to the Nile, a laurel tree bowed in homage to Jesus. Today its branches are inclined downwards to the ground and then turn up to the heavens. All are covered with leaves. It is called the "Worshipper."
12. Qussqam. As they headed south, idols began to crumble in towns along the way. At Qussqam, a stone statue cracked and fell. The locals were infuriated and drove the family from their town. A natural devastation occurred to the entire town after they rejected the family. (An example of Karma)
13. Meir (7 kms west of Qussqam). The town welcomed the family with warm hospitality. The next day multitudes of sick people assembled around Jesus. He laid his hand on each one, healing their infirmities. The town was blessed when they left.
14. Hermopolis Magna was a city where the family probably paid traveling taxes—a key form of revenue for the Roman emperor. There were images of horses at all four corners of the gate leading to the city. These horses fell when the family entered the gate. The governor of the city adored the family when he heard about what

happened. The king of Egypt, however, was troubled and sought to find the family. When Jesus was revealed, the king sought to kill him. However, a man named Lazarus (who was an official of the king) asked Joseph where they were from. When he heard they were from Palestine, he felt sorry for them and asked the king to spare the child and family. The king complied. This Lazarus became friends of the family and was raised from the dead decades later. The next day many people came and were healed by Jesus.

15. At Kenis, the family stayed a few days because the people were so welcoming. Jesus performed miracles here too. A friend of Joseph's who had worked with him in Jerusalem, invited them to stay with him. His son was possessed and Jesus cured him. Because of his miracles, the idols in the town became broken and smashed.
16. In an unknown town the family entered while a wedding was being held. The woman was deaf and dumb. When she saw Mary carrying Jesus, she stretched out her hands. Mary gave her the baby, Jesus, and he cured her.
17. On a mountain west of Meir two thieves assaulted the family (including Salome) and took all of their clothes. Mary began to weep, afraid that the thieves would kill Jesus. The Egyptian thief took pity when he saw the tears on her cheeks. His companion was a Jew from Syria. The Egyptian asked for his portion of the garments and gave them back to the family. These thieves were crucified with Jesus. The Egyptian was forgiven by Jesus on the cross; the Syrian refused to repent.
18. Gabal (327 kms south of Cairo). A town next to Qussqam (which was destroyed by a natural disaster). The family stayed in Gabal for six months, which now has the Monastery of Al-Muharrq. They lived in a cave in which Jesus slept on a rock, which is now the altar of the Church of the Virgin Mary. The church was the first one built after Mark came to Egypt. The Copts call this area the second Bethlehem. It is here where an angel appears to Joseph and tells him to return to Israel because Herod is dead. Thus, they begin their return journey through Egypt.
19. Mt. Dronka. The family stayed here and blessed the area. A Monastery was built in their honor.
20. They went through Old Cairo while retracing many of their steps back to Israel and Joseph's home in Nazareth. They often stopped at places they stayed or passed through on their journey south. They often stayed with people they met on their journey before.

Notes: The journey lasted over three years. They traveled over 2000 kms with the donkey, using a sail boat for a portion of the trip south, maybe riding camels on the Way of the Sea but mostly walking on foot. The journey was agonizing through winter's cold and desert heat. The Magi's gifts may have been used to finance their travels. A common legend has the angel Uriel saving John from the slaughter and bringing him to travel with the family throughout Egypt. Salome, maybe Mary's sister, may have traveled with them too.

The importance of springs and wells relate to the Jewish laws and practices of purity.

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