



Pastor's Ponderings

"No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money." Matthew 6:24

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Matthew 6:19-21

Jesus spoke about money in 11 of his 39 parables. Recently, a person I respect gave me a perspective about wealth. He said it would take 10 years to accumulate a million dollars if one saved \$100,000 a year compared to what it would take to make a billion dollars. One would have to save \$100,000 a year for 10,000 years to make a billion dollars.

In the Bible, from Old Testament to the New Testament, followers are encouraged to tithe, to be generous. A tithe is considered a tenth of one's crops or income. If a billionaire gave a tenth away it would be \$100,000,000, if a millionaire it would be \$100,000.

So, the rich are challenged to be generous by God.

Before we point away from ourselves to the obvious people Jesus is challenging to be generous, let's look at the United States and consider how we all compare to the Global standard: 56% of the United States are in the highest income bracket; 32% are in the Upper middle income bracket of the world; and 7% are in the middle income bracket of the world. Only 5% of the United States are in the lowest income bracket or poorest income bracket. This is compared to the Global Standard where 71% of the world is in the lowest income bracket and poorest income bracket.

We are blessed financially, and we are all challenged by the Bible's focus on generosity to help those less fortunate.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Fred he/him/his



Worship and Picnic in the Park Sunday, September 7 at 10:00 AM (Worship)

Please join us as we enjoy time spent with families from TOL, Augustana and Good Shepherd at **Veteran's Park in the City of Tonawanda** (777 Niagara Street, Shelter #2). There will **not** be a service at TOL that day. Worship is at **10:00 AM**, followed by fellowship and lunch. **Note: Carpooling from TOL will be available! Please call the church office if you would like a ride!**

Generosity

September Community Collection!

2nd Annual Harvest House Baby Shower – Diapers

This month we will once again join with local Lutheran churches in collecting donations of diapers (any size) that will benefit Harvest House, an organization located in Buffalo that has a Babies and Children's Ministry. In 2024, the organization supplied 600 families each month and the demand has grown to 800. Please place your items in the marked container in the donation area.

2nd Annual Craft Show * Basket Raffle * Baked Goods Sale Saturday, September 6 from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM! (there's still time to help!)

Volunteers: Please use the sign-up sheet posted on the main bulletin board that lists the various tasks.

Basket Donations: If you have a basket (or items for one), or a gift card donation, please contact Debbie or Kelly.
Deadline for basket donations is Sunday, August 31.

Baked Goods: They should be delivered to the church by **Friday, September 5 or by 9:00 AM on Saturday**. If possible, please pre-plate or bag your donations. If you have any questions, please speak to Earlene. Thank you!



Mark Your Calendars: Chicken Chowder Sale Saturday, October 25!

TOL's annual Chicken Chowder Sale is right around the corner! Join us on **Saturday, October 25**, with chowder ready for **pick-up starting at 12:00 PM** (price TBD). It's a popular event, and the chowder tends to sell out fast so come early and bring a friend!

Want to get involved?

There are many ways to help make this fundraiser a success.

- **Volunteer:** Sign up on the bulletin board or speak with **Matt**.
- **Donate ingredients:** Visit the ingredient sign-up board in the **narthex**. If you're donating produce, please drop it off at the TOL kitchen during the **week of October 20**. We'll be prepping the vegetables on **Friday, October 24**.
- **Tell your friends:** Tell your family, friends and neighbors about TOL's chicken chowder!

Stay tuned for more details in your Sunday bulletin.

Bible Study, Begins in September!

Pastor Fred will hold a four-week Bible Study on 1st John at Augustana LC on **Fridays from 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM**. It will be held on **September 5, 12, and 19**, with the final session on **October 3**. Hope to see you there!

Trinity Tidings, September 2025

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



ELCA Prayer Ventures, September 2025*

September 7: "God's work. Our hands." Sunday

ELCA congregations join together today for our annual day of service, celebrating that we are freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor. Pray for service activities around the country that unite people, ecumenical partners and community agencies as we serve our neighbors in need, strengthen our communities and demonstrate God's love.

ELCA Prayer Ventures, September 2025*

- † Praise the Lord! Happy are those who fear the Lord, who greatly delight in his commandments" (Psalm 112:1). Pray that we will find joy and guidance in the ways and commandments of God and be inspired by God's wisdom, love for humanity and concern for those who suffer.
- † Pray for the resolution of international conflicts that cause suffering, violence, mistrust, injustice, economic crises and political instability. Ask God to forgive us for sometimes playing a role in these conflicts, intentional or not.
- † Pray for Palestinians in Gaza, its surrounding areas and wherever they have fled in search of shelter and relief from war. Pray that the devastation and suffering will end and that leaders will commit to peaceful solutions, reconciliation, mutual respect and the rebuilding of communities that can thrive.
- † Remember in prayer those recovering from devastating floods and grieving the loss of loved ones and neighbors. Give thanks for the work we do through Lutheran Disaster Response to respond to urgent needs, give emotional and spiritual care, support long-term recovery and restore the vitality of communities. Ask God to strengthen and bless our partnerships with synods, congregations, local relief agencies and ecumenical relief programs.
- † The story of Lazarus and the rich man in the gospels of Luke and John reminds us of God's love and concern for those who suffer poverty, illness and neglect. Pray that we will embrace all people as neighbors who deserve respect, compassion, love and inclusion.

Prayer for Trinity Old Lutheran, Augustana and Good Shepherd 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 Trinity Old Lutheran, Augustana and Good Shepherd. Strengthen our relationships in this community as we serve our neighbors in love.

Trinity Tidings

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3445 Sheridan Drive, Amherst, NY 14226

Church Office: 716-836-4868 or 716-836-4990

Church email: trinityoldlutheranchurch@gmail.com

Karen Mulartrick and Jan Sherman, Co-Editors

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September Mission: Global Refuge (formerly Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service)

"With more than 1,000 partners and 50,000 volunteers, we are the largest faith-based national nonprofit exclusively dedicated to helping restore a sense of home to immigrants, asylum seekers, and refugees. Since 1939, we've built a legacy of compassion by walking alongside more than 750,000 new neighbors as they rebuild their lives in the United States."

"Everyone deserves a place to call home." Its mission includes:

- Resettlement
- Asylum Services
- Mental Health
- Advocacy
- Inclusion and Empowerment
- Supporting Children/Families
- Combatting Disinformation

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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 Global Refuge). Thank you for your support.

August Mission: ELCA Disaster Response—Texas Flooding

Thank you for your donations to support the ELCA and those recovering and rebuilding after the devastating July flooding.

Remember in prayer those recovering from devastating floods and grieving the loss of loved ones and neighbors. Give thanks for the work we do through Lutheran Disaster Response to respond to urgent needs, give emotional and spiritual care, support long-term recovery and restore the vitality of communities. Ask God to strengthen and bless our partnerships with synods, congregations, local relief agencies and ecumenical relief programs.

[ELCA Prayer Ventures, September 2025]

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. Please place your donations in the narthex shopping cart or at the elevator entrance during the week (Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 9:00 AM to Noon). Thank you!



My Musings
by Diane Schmidtke

FAREWELL, SWEET PEACH

Mother Nature will have her say
For doesn't it always happen that way?
You can resist with your mower
With sprays, rakes and blower
But this only causes delay...

And now comes such fate for our tree
Once ten dollars: a deal, you see...
After years of nary a peach in sight
Came years of very juicy delight
With bounty's amazing display!

We'd sit on our porch facing West
As she proudly put forth all her best.
We'd smile as the birds landed there
We'd count, pick and gladly we'd share,
Imagining our sundae, sorbet!

But now, the sad time of disease
The last season to be here, to please
As roots no longer can cling
And branches no longer can sing
And wild life no longer will play...

I'm grateful for cobblers and pies
For chin dribbles and squirts in my eyes
For gifting to neighbor and friend
Forgetting there must come the end
When the "Mother of Nature" calls it a day.



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Adult Ed. Classes with Charlie Schmidtke

You are invited to join the class on
Monday afternoons in the Fireside Room
(or on Zoom) from **1:00 PM to 2:30 PM**.
Please contact Charlie for a Zoom link.



2025

September 15	Jerusalem - Peter, John and James (Acts)
September 29	Damascus - Tarsus - Saul Conversion
October 13	Antioch - Barnabas (Acts)
October 27	India - Thomas (Acts of Thomas)
November 10	Armenia - Nathaniel/Bartholomew and Jude/Thaddeus
November 24	Egypt - Coptic Tradition (Philip)
December 8	Infancy Gospels (Thomas and Syriac)

2026

January 19	Gospel of James (Infancy Stories and Mary's Perpetual Virginity)
February 2	Rome - Peter and Paul
February 16	Corinth - Letters
March 2	Ephesus - Paul
March 16	Alexandria and Byzantium
March 30	Galatia and Thessalonica - Paul
April 13	Gospel of Judas
April 27	Letters, Acts and Revelation of Peter
May 11	Spain and France - James (Major) and Mary Magdalene

Support Group for Grieving Parents... This group, for parents of children and grandchildren who have died, meets on the **1st Tuesday** each month in the Fireside Room (**10:00 AM to 11:30 AM**) and also on Zoom. Coordinators are: Charlie, Diane and Jean.

Hope & Healing: Christian Cancer Support

For anyone on a cancer journey, Linda Sokoly (Ministry Leader) from Augustana LC is available to give support through emails, phone calls, texts or one-to-one in person conversations or prayer. Linda can be reached through the Augustana church email at augustchurch@yahoo.com or by calling the Augustana church office at 716-832-5720.



ELCA Prayer Ventures, September 2025*

- † **Labor Day** Praise the work people do to sustain their families and benefit their communities and society. Pray that all will receive fair wages, work in safe environments, receive encouragement, be renewed through times of sabbath, and experience joy and fulfillment in their labor. Pray for those who seek employment and for the care, support and well-being of people unable to work.
- † Give thanks for the faithful service and leadership of Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton. Pray that her faith, gifts and commitment will continue to inspire us to work for justice and peace, to love and serve our neighbors, and to share the good news of Jesus Christ in a world yearning for hope and renewal.
- † Ask God to bless and guide the work of the ELCA Gender Justice and Women's Empowerment program, informed by the unique voices and experiences of people across race, ethnicity, ability, class, sexuality and age. Pray for the advancement of gender justice in the church and society — justice grounded in Scripture, Lutheran theology and people of all gender identities working together.
- † Take time to pray for the people and situations that first came to mind when you awoke this morning.

Operation Christmas Child... As we wrap up our collection for the year, we have combined September and October with suggested donations of coloring books, crayons, watercolor paint sets, children's books, puzzles, travel size games, and flash cards. Please place your donations in the bin located in the main hallway. Thank you for your donations—they are greatly appreciated.

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](https://www.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.



Adult Ed. Classes with Charlie Schmidtke
Study Notes: "Armenian Church"

Part I: Armenia

Why the Armenian Church? When I visited Israel, I became fascinated, and sometimes irritated by churches/chapels being built on every possible holy site, e.g., along the Via Delarosa (the Way of the Cross). The church at the Sermon on the Mount annoyed me the most because it destroyed the feeling of the rolling hills and trying to visualize Jesus speaking to the people seated before him. The church, parking lot and bleachers ruined the landscape. However, I was intrigued by the presence of Armenian churches at the site of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and in Bethlehem. I understood the Catholic and the Greek Orthodox churches, but why Armenia.

Armenia lies in the highlands of the Caucasus Mountains. There is evidence of an early civilization in Armenia in the Bronze Age and earlier, dating to about 4000 BCE. Archaeological surveys in 2010 and 2011 have resulted in the discovery of the world's earliest known leather shoe, skirt, and wine-producing facility. The first Armenian state was established in 2100 BCE by a man named Hayk. Religion in ancient Armenia was historically related to a set of beliefs that, in Persia, led to the emergence of Zoroastrianism (the religion of the Magi). The country used the solar Armenian calendar, which consisted of 12 months of 30 days. They also had five "extra" days. Their calendar is out of sync with the Julian calendar (our calendar) and needs to add one year every 1,461 years. The days of the month have names, not numbers.

Over the centuries, Armenia went from its own empire to being controlled by the Ottoman Empire to being a part of the USSR. The outbreak of World War I led to a confrontation between the Ottoman Empire and the Russian Empire in the Caucasus Mountains regions. A new government in Istanbul began to look on the Armenians with distrust and suspicion because the Imperial Russian Army contained a contingent of Armenian volunteers. On April 24, 1915 Armenian intellectuals were arrested by Ottoman authorities and, eventually, a large proportion of Armenians living in Anatolia perished in what has become known as the Armenian Genocide. The genocide was implemented in two phases: the wholesale killing of the able-bodied male population through massacre and subjection of army conscripts to forced labor, followed by the deportation of women, children, the elderly and infirm on death marches leading to the Syrian desert. Driven forward by military escorts, the deportees were deprived of food and water and subjected to periodic robbery, rape, and massacre. There was local Armenian resistance in the region, developed against the activities of the Ottoman Empire. The events of 1915 to 1917 are regarded by Armenians and the vast majority of Western historians to have been state-sponsored mass killings, or genocide. To this day, Turkish authorities deny the genocide took place.

The Armenian Genocide is acknowledged to have been one of the first modern genocides. According to the research conducted by Arnold J. Toynbee (the first famous Sociologist), an estimated 600,000 Armenians died during deportation from 1915 to 1916. This figure, however, accounts for only the first year of the Genocide and does not

take into account those who died or were killed after the report was compiled on May 24, 1916. The International Association of Genocide Scholars places the death toll at "more than a million." Armenia and the Armenian diaspora (those Armenians living outside of the country) have been campaigning for official recognition of the events as genocide for over 30 years. These events are traditionally commemorated yearly on April 24, the Armenian Martyr Day, or the Day of the Armenian Genocide.

Armenia was annexed by the Red Army and along with Georgia and Azerbaijan was incorporated into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as part of the Transcaucasian SFSR (TSFSR) on March 4, 1922. The TSFSR existed from 1922 to 1936, when it was divided up into three separate entities (Armenian SSR, Azerbaijan SSR, and Georgian SSR).

Armenians enjoyed a period of relative stability within the USSR in contrast to the turbulent final years of the Ottoman Empire. The situation was difficult for the church, which struggled with the secular/anti-religion policies of the USSR.

Armenia was not the scene of any battles in World War II, however, an estimated 500,000 Armenians (nearly a third of the population) served in the Red Army during the war, and 175,000 died. It is claimed that the freedom index in the region had seen an improvement after the death of Joseph Stalin in 1953 and the emergence of Nikita Khrushchev as the new general secretary of the CPSU. Soon, life in Armenia's SSR began to see rapid improvement. The church, which was limited during the secretaryship of Stalin, was revived when Catholicos Vazgen I assumed the duties of his office in 1955. In 1967, a memorial to the victims of the Armenian Genocide was built at a hill above the gorge in Yerevan, the capital. This occurred after mass demonstrations took place on the tragic event's fiftieth anniversary in 1965. We'll continue this brief history next month.

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Dinner/Theater at TOL
Friday, October 17
6:00 PM, Pot Luck Dinner
7:00 PM, Theater
Admission Free

Come and listen to Sancho (Charlie Schmidtke) talk about his adventures with Don Quixote de La Mancha. You will be taken to a world of ideals and windmills. Plus, you will get a glimpse into the importance of the Impossible Dream.



Sign up on the bulletin board or contact the church office (716-836-4868) or email the church office at trinityoldlutheranchurch@gmail.com or Charlie at schmidtkecharles@gmail.com.