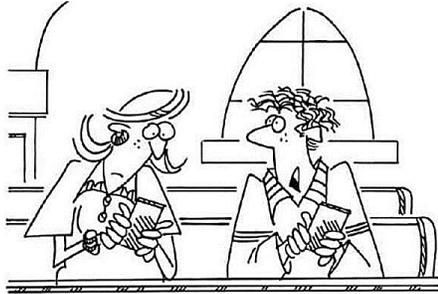




Pastor's Ponderings

Does this cartoon describe where you are at?

Whether we come to worship, with our phone in hand, a coffee, or just having read the Sunday paper, we come to worship...



"The Pastor keeps referring to 'this morning's text' ... but which one?"

- with the hope that we would encounter God today.
- with a desire to be part of a community.
- to begin again our week and to get rejuvenated.
- to hear we are forgiven.
- to hear we are not alone.
- to hear we are loved.
- to hear that we are part of something bigger than ourselves.
- to hear hope.
- to sing praise and share our thanks for what God has done.
- to pray and be humbled by what God has done through Jesus.
- to laugh/cry/think/escape/learn/be.
- to serve.

Henri Nouwen, shared this thought: "Did I offer peace today? Did I bring a smile to someone's face? Did I say words of healing? Did I let go of my anger and resentment? Did I forgive? Did I love? These are the real questions.

As followers of Christ our call is to be answers for people in our confusing and difficult world. As we go from church into the mission field of the world we can impact many and share God's love.

In a month in which we give thanks, I challenge us to show our thanks through service.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Fred he/him/his



Adult Ed. 2021-2022 Charlie Schmidtke

We meet on **Mondays (1:00 PM to 2:30 PM)** in the Fireside Room with a Zoom option for those who do not want to attend in person. Please let me know if you would a Zoom invitation. I suspect we will continue to Zoom and meet in person for the foreseeable future. Upcoming classes are listed below. Hope to see you at any or all.

Charlie

- Daoism (November 8, 15, 22)
- Judaism (January 10, 17)
- Islam (January 31 and February 7, 14, 21)



Table Talk Wednesday Evenings at 6:30 PM

Please join us! We are using Charlie Schmidtke's new book, "My I's," as a resource for the topics of discussion (including love and respect for the world, family and friends). Reading the book is not a pre-requisite for attending. This class is held in the evening so that those who might work during the day will be able to attend. The topics for November are listed below.

- Nov. 10: "Societal Griefism" and its impact in our lives
- Nov. 17: Respect and love for the world and places in our lives

New! Advent Bible Study

Pastor Fred will lead this three-week Bible Study on Friday mornings, **10:00 AM to 11:30 AM, at Augustana Lutheran Church.**

The classes will meet on **December 3, 10 and 17.**

A Zoom invite will be offered for those who can't make it in person. Hope to see you there!

The first Sunday in Advent is November 28.



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!

Daylight Saving Time Ends Sunday, November 7...
...set your clocks back one hour!

In-church Worship Guidelines (November)

Based on CDC and Upstate New York Synod recommendations, we are strongly urging everyone to please wear a mask indoors and continue to socially distance.

We understand that getting vaccinated and wearing masks are personal decisions, and we ask everyone to be respectful and nonjudgmental about the decisions of others.



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.



ELCA Prayer Ventures, November 2021

Thanksgiving Day Give thanks today — and every day — for the undeserved blessings we receive from God for our sustenance and well-being. Ask God to help us live with gratitude, recognize the true source of our food and other blessings, responsibly manage our resources, and exercise generosity and love with our neighbors in need, here and globally.

All Saints Day Remember and give thanks for all the saints who have influenced our lives, faith, wisdom and vocational decisions, and who have left an imprint on us through their compassion and example. Pray for people grieving the loss of someone significant in their lives, that they will be comforted by God and know that, as members of the body of Christ and communities of faith, they are not alone in their grieving.

Veterans Day Remember in prayer women and men who serve in the military, their families, federal chaplains and those who attend to the needs of returning veterans. Give thanks for the sacrifice veterans have made on our behalf to secure freedom, justice, peace and security for our country and other nations.



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Trinity Tidings

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Mission for November: Veterans One-stop Center of Western New York

This non-profit organization (located in Buffalo) continues to provide support services to local veterans and their families, including: Benefits, Legal, Employment, Education, Housing, Programs, and Readjustment/Financial Counseling.

Mission: "The Veterans One-stop Center of WNY brings people, resources and organizations together to improve the quality of life for those who have served or are serving in the Armed Forces of the United States and their families." From: www.vocwny.org

Copyright © 2019 – Veterans One-stop Center of Western New York

Please place your donations in the marked envelopes in the narthex or mail your donations to the church office (indicate on your check that it is designated for Veterans One-stop Center of WNY).

October Mission

Thank you for your donations to support Operation Christmas Child! We put together 22 boxes with the items that have been donated or purchased with some of our Theme Basket profits.

A big thank you to all who have helped us with this project— but it is not too late to make up a shoe box! All boxes are due by Sunday, November 14.

Hearts and Hands: Faith in Action

Hearts and Hands (HNN) continues to serve Amherst, Clarence, North Tonawanda, and the Southern Tier and welcomes all residents of Erie County and Eastern Niagara County. In-Home Support includes: Food Preparation, Laundry, Coffee and Conversation, Housekeeping, Minor Home Repairs. Caregiver Respite Services include: Canine Caregivers, Coffee and Conversation, Friendly visits at Home, Sharing a Meal.



For more program details and information, please visit the HNN website at www.hnncares.org/services or call 716-406-8311.

TOL is a part of this community of volunteers— Neighbor Helping Neighbor Volunteer Program!

Adult Ed. with Charlie Schmidtke: Study Notes on Hinduism

Portions of Charlie's notes will appear in the November, December and January 2022 *Tidings*. If the notes pique your interest, please join the group Monday afternoons (1:00 to 2:30 PM)! Upcoming world religion classes are listed on the front page of this issue.

Hinduism—Part I

Hinduism is principally found in Indian, Nepal and Mauritius. It emerged out of the Indian culture between 2500-1500 BC, which is earlier than Judaism and comparable to the religions of Egypt. The word Hinduism was first used in the early 19th century by Indians who wanted to distinguish themselves from other religions found under British control. In reality Hinduism is a wide variety of religious, philosophical, and cultural sets of beliefs and traditions. Unlike the religions of the West, there is no ecclesiastical order, no unquestioned religious authority, no governing body, no prophets, no one binding book, no real dogmas, no founder, no creed or declaration of faith, no rigid boundaries (and not all are vegetarians). Today 85% of India is Hindu.

Hinduism for many Indians refers to *Sanatana Dharma* – The Eternal Way, which is beyond history and includes reincarnation. Many believe in a transcendent God who is beyond the universe, yet is within all living beings and can be approached in a wide variety of ways. Hindus may believe in one god, many gods, no gods, or many manifestations of sacred power. The major deities are:

Brahman—Creator of the universe. In Sanskrit there are two parts to the word—*Brah* is the creation or illusion and *man*, which means to destroy this illusion and connect the soul to the supreme being or to those who connect with the supreme being. He is the pervasive, infinite, eternal truth and bliss which does not change, yet is the cause of all changes *Brahman* is also connected to the *Atman*—our inner “self”.

Vishnu—He is a supreme being who creates, protects and transforms the universe. He is the God of Preservation, Reality, Karma restoration, and the protector of Good. Whenever the world is threatened with evil, chaos, and destructive forces, *Vishnu* descends in the form of an incarnation or avatar to restore the cosmic order and protect Dharma (the Eternal Way).

Shiva—He is responsible for creation and the upkeep and destruction of the world. *Shiva* is the source of good and evil and combines many contradictory elements. *Shiva's* role is to destroy the universe in order to recreate it. His powers of destruction are used to destroy the illusions and imperfections of this world, paving the way for beneficial change. His destruction is not arbitrary, rather it is constructive.

Parvati—A goddess of fertility, love, beauty, harmony, marriage, children and devotion. She is gentle and nurturing. She is the daughter of a mountain king and queen. Some sects say she is the sister of the river goddess *Ganga* and of *Vishnu*. She is the recreative energy and power of *Shiva* and is the cause of a bond that connects all beings and is a means for their spiritual release.

The deities are found in stories and in icons in temples ... they mediate between the human and the sacred world. Mediations are images or places that are sacred (temples for example).

Two common beliefs among Hindus are karma and reincarnation. Karma means action, work or deed. Good intent and good deeds contribute to good karma while bad intent and bad deeds contribute to bad karma and bad rebirths.

Karma may affect the future in your current life as well as the nature and quality of future lives. Reincarnation is the idea that all actions have karma/effects. Salvation is freedom from karma. As long as karma is a part of your life you will continue to be reincarnated.

Rituals are very diverse and change from place to place. They typically revolve around purity and all rituals need to be performed as free of pollutions as possible. One ritual example is marriage. It is arranged by both sets of parents. Factors include one's caste, income level, occupation, and astrological compatibility. Another ritual relates to death. The common belief is that the family becomes polluted when one dies. Cremation eliminates the pollution of death and reintegrates the family into normal social life. It is ideal to cremate the same day as death.



Thoughts on Retreat at LCLC by DSchmidtke

This year's retreat, “Love in the Time of Covid” was held the first weekend of October at Lake Chautauqua Lutheran Center. It seems that each year there are obstacles put in our way as a contrast to the beauty and joy of the actual gathering. In past years there have been homecoming parades in Westfield and Mayville which delayed people; this year there was a detour on Rt. 430 where the camp is. Despite some frustration, all 19 of us arrived safely! Our leader, Charlie, always begins the weekend reminding us that open minds and hearts are an invitation for visits from the Holy Spirit, and each time we are blessed. In the light of Covid, we discussed Ecclesiastes 3: “to everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under Heaven...” as well as Jesus' sermon on the mount: “Blessed are....”

We laughed, we cried, we shared, we made new friends, we made “Covid collages”; we worshipped, we ate and drank and played games. We lived, enjoyed nature, and gained strength from one another. The spirit was definitely in our minds. I was moved to write this poem.

The Retreat: “Love in the Time of Covid”

Enter the door, what shall we see?
Is this a risk? Is this for me?
Will I find someone I'm searching for?
Is this adventure or perhaps much, much more?

Trust that the Spirit has found her way here
Trust we can share without any fear
Trust that our hearts will be open to grace
Trust we will know we belong in this place.

Skeletons from closets brought into the light
Bones in the lake, a bit of a fright
Laughter and tears to forge new connection
Where will this take us, in which direction?

Can we find the balance we seek?
Can we inherit this day like the meek?
Can those who mourn be comforted here?
Can we show mercy with a listening ear?

Then, in this moment and in this place
We've all been touched with amazing Grace
And Joy sits beside us, in our circle it spoke
And infused every soul with the thing we call hope.

We came somewhat weary, searching and worn
Gradually soothing what was tattered and torn
As God worked through Spirit with a transforming hand
To polish and hone us like sea glass in sand.

Used with permission.

**Celebrating 10 Years of Worship Together
with Pastor Fred!
Sunday, October 17, 2021**

Poem for Pastor

For 10 good years we've shared a blessing.
It's filled us up like jam and bread.
It's made our hearts and souls to sing.
It's name is really Fred!!

Arriving here when we were needy,
He has served and learned each name.
He has held our hands and shared our tears;
Our dear pastor he became.

And through the years we've seen his talents
To sing and act and preach
He also plays the cello
And loves to hike and teach.

His smile and his laughter
Begin upon his face
And travel all around the room
To fill our space with Grace.

His love of God and people
His love of earth and sky
His love for Anne and family:
He's just an amazing guy!!!

DSchmidtke

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Thank You, Thank you, Thank you!

Thank you for the surprise celebration for my 10th year as pastor of TOL. Anne and I are overwhelmed by the generosity of the congregation. With the financial gifts and Delta gift card we will be able to fly out to Montana and Oregon to see our family. The Buffalo Bills necktie is a WINNER! The wonderful framed print of one of my favorite verses, Micah 6:8, will greet everyone as we leave church and go into the mission field of life. The book that was created with pictures and well wishes will be treasured.

It seems like yesterday that I came on as ¼ time pastor while I was getting my Master Degree in Mental Health Counseling. Now I serve two churches and feel very Blessed. God bless you and our future together.

THANKS AGAIN!
Pastor Fred

KUDOS 

A very special thank you to Earlene for planning and coordinating the celebration worship service! Thank you to all who helped: Nancy and Charlie for their preparations and participation; Don and Barb for their musical contributions; Jeff for preparing the slide presentation photos, and Diane for her beautiful poem.



“When you can't find the sunshine, be
the sunshine.” *Anonymous*



Local Food Pantries

Thank you for your continued support of the pantries at Good Shepherd LC in Tonawanda and Community of Good Neighbors (CGN) in Buffalo!

Please place your donations in the shopping cart in the narthex or leave your items in the marked boxes at the elevator entrance during the week (Tuesdays – Fridays, 9:00 AM to 12:00 Noon).

Suggested items include:

- Canned goods (vegetables, soups, tuna, etc.)
- Jar items (spaghetti sauce, peanut butter)
- Boxes of pantry staples (cereal, pasta)
- Paper goods (toilet paper, paper towels, etc.)
- Feminine hygiene products
- Gift cards (Tops or Wegmans stores) can be taken to the church office.

Ways to Give to TOL

Online: 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.



New!

Hope and Healing: A Christian Cancer Support Group

Begins Tuesday, November 23, 2021
3:00 PM to 4:00 PM
Augustana Lutheran Church

hope

My cancer journey has blessed me. My faith and trust in God have strengthened. The blessing I am surprised and grateful for is the bond I have developed with fellow cancer patients. Through prayers requested by people and individuals themselves after our Sunday services we learned of their cancer journey. By sending cards of prayer and encouragement and phone calls, we “met” and started conversations of our cancer journeys. We have shared treatment stories, our illness, our pains, our emotions and our victories too!

I am going to host a Christian cancer support group, Hope and Healing. It will be held the **4th Tuesday of every month at 3:00 PM to 4:00 PM starting on November 23**. It will be at Augustana Lutheran Church, 3143 Eggert Road, Tonawanda for in-person meeting and on Zoom.

The agenda will be simple. A bible verse to reflect on. A sharing of our journey (or not if you are not comfortable). Discussion. Prayers for individual needs. Laughter. We need to end with our hearts lightened and encouragement to face our challenges.

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,

Linda Sokoley