



## Pastor's Ponderings

I could begin with a review of the year, but I believe we have been concentrating on all the happenings of the past year and now need to look forward.

Paul writes in 2 Corinthians: "And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit." 3:18

We are being transformed! Gloria in Excelsis Deo! One post on Facebook that I found uplifting and motivating came from my friend and pastor, Jennifer Dyer Boyd—"To celebrate diversity is to celebrate divinity.... Because each one of us is made in the image of God."

I also enjoyed a poem that I think can lift us up to start the new year.

### Why I Wake Early

Hello, sun in my face.  
Hello, you who make the morning  
and spread it over the fields  
and into the faces of the tulips  
and the nodding morning glories,  
and into the windows of, even, the  
miserable and the crotchety—  
best preacher that ever was,  
dear star, that just happens  
to be where you are in the universe  
to keep us from ever-darkness,  
to ease us with warm touching.  
To hold us in the great hands of light  
good morning, good morning, good morning.  
Watch, now, how I start the day  
in happiness, in kindness.

Mary Oliver

May all have a transformational, glorious, celebration of diversity, and a happy and kind NEW YEAR.

Peace,  
Pastor Fred he/him/his

## Thank You!

Dear People of TOL,  
Anne and I would like to thank you for the support, prayers, cards, and gifts that we received throughout the year and especially around Christmas. We wish all of you a blessed and happy New Year.

Pastor Fred

## Pastor's Bible Study—Friday Mornings (Zoom Only)



Beginning **Friday, January 8, 2021**, we will discuss the "**Book of Acts**" (10:00 AM – 11:30 AM). If you'd like a Zoom invitation, please contact Pastor Fred or the church office.

## Adult Ed. Classes with Charlie Schmidtke (Zoom Only) Mondays at 1:00 PM



We will finish Old Testament women in the month of January; then turn to those in the New Testament. I've identified clusters of women for three classes: as his disciples, those at Easter and those at Pentecost. In some instances we'll be talking about unidentified women and in other cases we can give them names with some background. I've left the last class open because we inevitably do not complete a topic on each day. If we cover everyone by then, I'll surprise you.

Charlie

Classes will start via Zoom and it is unknown when we will be able to return to live attendance and stop zooming.

January 11:	Ruth and Naomi
January 25:	Jezebel and Asharah
February 8:	Mary and Elizabeth
February 22:	Mary and Martha
March 8:	Women Disciples
March 22:	Women on Easter Morning
April 12:	Women at Pentecost
April 26:	Lydia and Priscilla
May 10:	TBD



## 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!

## Congregational Budget Meeting

On Sunday, December 13, the 2021 Budget was passed and four members were elected to serve on the Church Council. Thank you to Stephanie Seyse and Scott Edwards for returning, and to Matt Grabau, and Peter Stecher for agreeing to serve. Sue Wloch completed her term and we thank her for serving.

## 2020 Financial Statements and 2021 Offering Envelopes

The items will be available at the elevator entrance area—stop by on Tuesdays - Fridays (9:00 AM to 12:00 Noon) to pick up yours. If you would like your statement mailed to you, please call Nancy in the office (836-4868).

## Annual Report Submissions

The Annual Congregational Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, March 7. Please submit your reports to the church office by **Sunday, February 14** (email: [trinityoldlutheran@verizon.net](mailto:trinityoldlutheran@verizon.net)).

## Welcome to Dick Edwards...as our new sexton!

Dick is starting on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the year as we say goodbye, and enjoy your retirement, to Harold and Jane. Dick has been hanging around the church changing lightbulbs, mowing, looking over the furnace, and so many other things—and now he will carry a cleaning rag, vacuum, and trash bags!

We look forward to your work. The challenge will be, can you last 40 years like Harold and Jane?

## 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.

The Prayer Chain is available to anyone having a prayer request. Please contact the church office with your request (836-4868).



### ELCA Prayer Ventures, January 2021

As the pandemic continues, pray for doctors, nurses, emergency responders and health care workers who need renewal, strength and our gratitude and recognition as they continue to serve at great personal risk and sacrifice for the sake of our health and well-being.

Pray for parents, students, employees and business owners whose plans and routines change day by day and week by week due to the uncertainty of the pandemic, that they might be hopeful, resilient and able to adapt, change and endure.

*Martin Luther King Day* Today we remember the life, ministry, sacrifice and activism of Martin Luther King Jr. Pray that his life and the legacies of others who have fought for civil rights and social reform will inspire our own commitment and persistence in working for racial justice, dismantling racism and combating white supremacy.

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Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, <sup>2</sup>"Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East and have come to worship him." Matthew 2:1-2

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### "Hearts & Hands"—Continues Assisting the Community during COVID-19

The organization is operating with limited and restricted services as the pandemic continues. No in-home services are currently available. Areas now being served are: Amherst, Kenmore, Tonawanda, Clarence, Alden, and the Southtowns. By following COVID-19 health and wellness guidelines, volunteers currently assist with the following services: transportation to everywhere it's needed; non-contact grocery deliveries; and "friendly phone calls."

More volunteers are also needed and training is available via Zoom or by phone. For more program details and information (and how to become a volunteer), please visit the HNH website at [www.hnhcares.org/services](http://www.hnhcares.org/services) or call 406-8311.

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

## Trinity Tidings

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### December Mission—Thank You

Thank you to all who supported the Channel 5 Cable TV Worship program that is presented every week by Parkside Lutheran Church in Buffalo! Your donations will help defray costs of production and channel access.

### January Mission Focus: ELCA World Hunger

"More than 820 million people - that's about 11 percent of people in our world today - are hungry."

"Working with and through our congregations in the U.S., Lutheran churches around the world, and other partners, ELCA World Hunger is uniquely positioned to reach communities in need. From health clinics to microloans, community meals to advocacy, your gifts to ELCA World Hunger support sustainable solutions that get at the root causes of hunger and poverty."

[from: ELCA website at [www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org).  
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Please mail your donations to the church office (indicate on your check that it is designated for ELCA World Hunger).

### Your Help is Needed to Fight Hunger at Home

This month we are once again asking for your support of the Community of Good Neighbors in Buffalo and the Good Shepherd LC food pantries. A list of requested items follows (please check food expiration dates before donating).

- Canned goods (vegetables, soups, tuna, etc.)
- Peanut butter and jelly
- Jar items (spaghetti sauce, applesauce)
- Boxes of pantry staples (cereal, pasta)
- Paper goods (toilet paper, paper towels, etc.)

Donations can be dropped off at the elevator entrance at TOL on Tuesdays - Fridays (9:00 AM to 12:00 Noon). Two marked bins will be provided.

### Online Giving to TOL...Tithe.ly is available for online giving.



You can set up your account through the TOL website ([www.trinityoldlutheran.com](http://www.trinityoldlutheran.com)) or download an easy-to-use app to your phone. The site is user-friendly and safe to use.

### Calendars for 2021—Thank You!

We extend our thanks to Anne Roberts Dobmeier at the Roberts & Wedekind Funeral Home (Grover Cleveland Highway and Bailey Avenue in Amherst) for generously donating beautiful, inspirational calendars for our members. Copies are available for you at the elevator entrance at TOL.

## TLC at TOL Respite Care Program

This will be our last article, which results from our decision to resign as Co-coordinators of the *TLC at TOL* Respite Care Program and to indefinitely suspend the program as of December 31, 2020. Ensuring the health and safety of our guests and volunteers was our top priority and we did not believe it was possible to meet COVID-19 guidelines. The uncertainty of when we would be able to resume our activities was another consideration.

Sue Wloch created the program in November 2014 with available seed money and a grant from Erie County Senior Services. We extend our *heartfelt* thanks to Sue for having the confidence and faith in us to carry on following her departure. It has been a blessing for us to co-coordinate and share the responsibilities in preparation each month.

We will remember greeting the caregivers and their loved ones as they arrived each month—sharing many smiles! We are thankful for our guests and their caregivers—a blessing—and we enjoyed getting to know them and spending time with them over the years. We can't say enough about all of the volunteers and what they meant to the program—they too are a blessing! We also enjoyed chair yoga time with Leanne Oldenbrook, as well as visits from therapy dogs (many were from the SPCA "Paws of Love" program)—and we were happy to share monthly updates on our activities with readers of the *Trinity Tidings*.

It has been a pleasure to serve the caregivers in our community and their loved ones. As we remember the good times, we also fondly remember the guests that needed to leave the program and the passing of current and former guests. What a blessing to have known all of them through *TLC at TOL*.

We are also grateful for the financial support and associations with Lutheran Charities of WNY, the Lutheran Foundation and the Alzheimer's Association WNY Chapter. Thank you to all who have supported *TLC at TOL* and we ask that you keep our Respite families and all caregivers in prayer.

As the program concludes, we are blessed to carry wonderful memories of this very special ministry and are thankful for the opportunity we had to share our thoughts with the congregation on Respite Recognition Sunday, November 15.

*Jan and Paulette*

## Operation Christmas Child Update

Our 33 boxes went to three different places—to Zambia in Southern Africa, Ghana in Western Africa, and Columbia, South America. Wow!! Thank you again to everyone who was part of this outreach. Please continue to collect items so we can get a jump start on 2021 (suggested items are listed below).

*Debbie*

### Operation Christmas Child for 2021

- Jan.: toothbrushes, dental floss, washcloths
- Feb.: hats, mittens, scarves, socks
- Mar.: combs, brushes, hair items
- Apr.: small toys for boys and girls (foam ball, slinky, jump rope, small cars, trucks, etc.)
- May: sunglasses, stickers, jewelry
- June: stuffed toys 10" or smaller, small musical instruments, small dolls
- July: pens, pencils, small manual pencil sharpeners, colored pencils, pencil cases
- Aug.: markers, coloring pads, notebooks
- Sept.: coloring books, crayons, watercolor paint sets
- Oct.: games, puzzles

## Charlie Schmidtke's New Book! (Part 1)

### "My I's: Isms, Ignorance, Interrelationships and Insights."

The phrase "An unexamined life is not worth living" is a truism that became a guide for Charlie Schmidtke's journey of self-reflection. His book is a unique mashup of memoir combined with philosophical reflections on life, cast within the topics of race, religion, gender, generations, and grief.

In an exploration that spans decades, he tells of encounters with Jim Crow, journeys through religious transformation, shifts from a male dominant lifestyle to a more balanced view of gender roles, wanders through generations, confronts profound tragedies, deaths, and grief, and encounters those who have blessed his life in ordinary as well as extraordinary ways. He looks specifically at the isms he himself has confronted, along with the social context that has pervaded his experiences. This highly personal narrative reflects how his attitude, language, and behavior have changed and become more inclusive, tolerant, and accepting. His stories range from light-hearted to serious and from amusing to introspective.

From Palmetto Publishing Group, the book is available through Barnes and Noble or Amazon. Hardbound, Paperback, or E-book copies are now available on-line only.

[[Part 2](#) will appear in the February *Trinity Tidings*.]



**Wishing everyone a blessed  
New Year!**