



## Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church

Monthly Newsletter - June 2025 - July 2025

The Rev. Frederick W. Kopp, Pastor

The Rev. Phillip Vender, Pastor Emeritus

*Sharing the love of Jesus in our changing world.*

### *Pastor's Ponderings*

***“But those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.” Isaiah 40:31***

I have been thinking a lot about hope. As I listen to the news trying to listen without my privileged sis gendered white male perspective, I get anxious for all the siblings in Christ that are trying to be the best version of themselves. As some people enter Pride month and as some people legitimately fear for their lives if asked to leave the USA or are forced to leave, they are on my mind, and I get scared for them.

Humans created in God's image should feel safe.

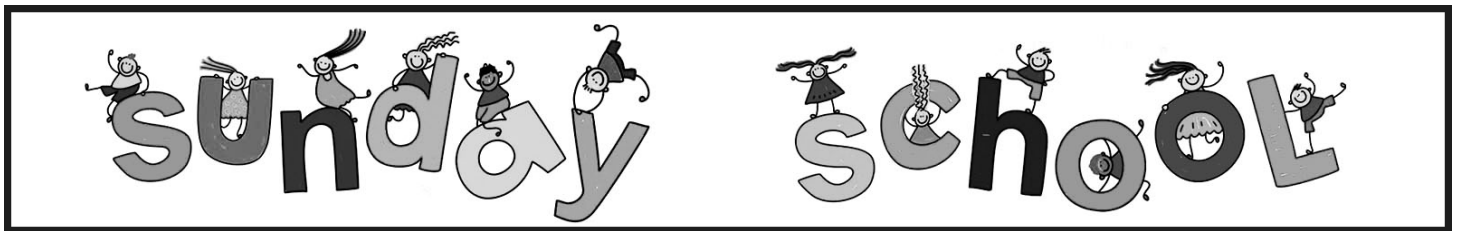
In the anxiety that I feel for many folks, I turn to scripture to try to find hope. Our Bible verse from Isaiah gives me hope and I hope it gives people patience, endurance and strength to carry on. For me, it describes a God who is there for all of God's people and is with us through it all.

Folks who are scared also need people to reach out to them to support them and tell them they are not alone. I encourage all to expand our circle of people we interact with to include those who are on the fringe, or on the outside of our circles, with support, friendship, prayer and inclusion.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Fred he/him/his

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This year our Sunday school classes have been based on the readings for each Sunday, so what the children hear in worship is what they learn more about in Sunday school. The materials we use are full of creative ways to enrich children's learning.

Many thanks to our Sunday school teachers: Dave Ellis, Linda Sokoley, and Johanna Andritz. Many thanks to the parents who encourage their children to worship on Sundays and even during the week and at night. Many thanks to all the children who have participated in worship and so many other activities!

Many thanks for your example, help, encouragement, and support. See you in September!

Dave Ellis, Linda Sokoley, and Johanna Andritz



## **RECONCILING IN CHRIST (RIC)**

June is Pride Month. During the month, we will celebrate with our Welcoming statement:

### **Augustana's Welcoming Statement**

"You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Luke 10:27

As a welcoming and affirming congregation, we welcome you in the name of Jesus Christ as beloved children of God. We welcome the doubters, the seekers, those of every race, culture, age, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ability, and financial status. However you express yourself, we invite you to join us as we gather in love and grace for all, sharing the love of Jesus in our changing world. You are unique, you are seen, you are heard, you are safe here, you are needed, you matter --- you are loved.

In a statement by the presiding bishop of the ELCA, she writes :

*"ELCA social teaching supports human rights for all people, regardless of their sex (biological), gender, or sexuality. This stance is rooted in respect and welcome for all people as created in the image of God and evident in the ELCA's longstanding commitment to protecting civil and human rights" (Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action, 2019). ...*

LGBTQIA+ community are our children, parents, siblings and

colleagues. They work hard and pay taxes. They serve in our congregations and communities. Our life together is enriched. They are us. The U.S. Supreme Court ruling brings us a step closer to realizing our founding conviction, "We the people of the United States."

St. Paul writes, "If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it" (1 Corinthians 12:26). ... There is more work to be done to guarantee equal rights for LGBTQIA+ people ...beyond the workplace, in housing, medical care and military service. We are committed to this work as we celebrate, during Pride Month and all year round, the gifts of our LGBTQIA+ siblings.

In Christ's peace,  
Elizabeth A. Eaton  
Presiding Bishop  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

There are materials for you to read and take on the corner table in the narthex (entry hall). Thank you.



# Odds ***N*** Ends ***from the Council President***

## **Council, ...**

- Our Annual Meeting will be held on **Sunday, June 22**, following worship.
- We are so very thankful for Paula Kerr, who has lovingly served as a congregational council member for the last six years!
- Thank you to all council members for their dedication and support of our church, members, outreach, love of the Lord...
- The next tri-church meeting will be on Tuesday, June 3 at 7:00pm, here. You are invited to join us.
- Work has been done in the sanctuary to help improve sound. Two speakers have been moved to better positions. Thank you to Pr. Devie for her help. Pastor Fred has a new mic. In the future, we hope to have a new computer and a camera in the back.
- Water issues related to heavy rains are being addressed.
- Congratulations to Charlie Kerr, who was confirmed on Sunday, May 25!!!

## Thank you:

- Thank you for the food you give to the Community of Good Neighbors!
- Thank you for coffee hour! It is filled with love and goodness and goodies!
- Thank you for adorning the chancel with flowers!
- Thank you for your donations at coffee hour. We are helping so many people in our neighborhoods and across the world with our gifts!
- Thank you for all the little things, big things, and all the in-betweens you do for our congregation, our neighborhood, and the world!
- Thank you to everyone who joins us with Zoom! It is so good to worship together.



***Serve one another humbly in faith." Galatians 5:13***

We have received another installment of the grant money (\$1,700) from Lutheran Charities and other Lutheran services. This money will help us offer our next learning permit classes in June. Beth Kerr will again be our instruction. Thank you, Beth! Patrick Kololo and Nora Pomplin will be helpers. Thank you.

These, two, three-hour classes will be offered at Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church on Main Street. At the end of the classes those participating will receive a gift card to pay for their learner permit. We also help them in other ways, as there is a need...

After these students receive their learner permit, they are then able to receive ten free, professional driving lessons, with the hope, of course, that they will soon be safe drivers!

These classes are a wonderful way to **be** together, **laugh** together, **learn** together and so much more!

Thank you for helping so many immigrants and refugees receive their learner permits and 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! It is so important to them. They are very thankful.

Drive safely!

Johanna

***“God is our refuge and strength,” – Psalm 46:1***

## **Ways to get more involved**

- **Pray** for the safety of refugees and migrants on the journey and for justice as they reach their destinations. Please continue to keep refugees, migrants, --- all immigrants --- in your prayers.
- Donate some of your Thrivent Action Team money to the RIDE program.

- **Advocate** for justice for migrant families. [www.elca.org/Advocacy](http://www.elca.org/Advocacy)



***An excerpt from synodical Bishop Lee Miller's letter:***

“As we continue our commitment to justice and accompaniment, practicing a G.R.A.C.E. Mindset, it is essential to recognize the interconnected realities shaping those impacted by immigration policies. Immigration justice intersects with racial equity, economic justice, and gender justice. Embracing this intersectional lens in the coming months allows us to:

- Address systemic inequalities by amplifying the voices of immigrants facing compounded challenges.
- Engage intersectional advocacy with partners working across these areas.
- Resource our congregations with tools to understand the broader social systems impacting immigrant communities.”



**DISASTER RESPONSE COMMITTEE**

**Augustana has a Disaster Response Committee made up of Council members and interested people in the congregation. All are welcome to join the committee. Speak to Johanna if you would like to join the committee.**



## Augustana Prayer Chain



If you have a prayer that you would like  
to be shared on the Prayer Chain,  
contact Devie Ellis:

RevDevie@aol.com / (716) 909-9583

### Sermon Discussion / Input

Pastor Fred invites all to join him in a bag lunch  
discussion of the texts for the next month of sermons.

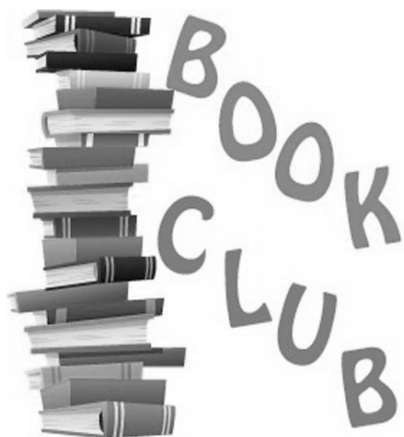
The sessions are at **Noon, for two hours**, usually on the 4th  
Wed. of the month, at TOL.

The next session is **June 25th**. Please tell Pastor if you plan to  
attend so he can prepare materials.

## WNY Church Unleashed

If you are unable to join us for in-person or ZOOM worship, you can watch  
Lutheran worship on Cable TV Chanel 5 MeTV, Sundays at 10:00 am.

“Church Unleashed” is run by Lutheran Pastors, Beigner, Griffiths and  
Smith. For previous weeks, go to YouTube and search for  
“WNY Church Unleashed.”



Bookclub will meet Thursday,  
June 26, 7 pm.

Read "The Frozen River" by Ariel Lawhon.  
A great book which I hope you will enjoy.  
Join us for a good discussion and  
fellowship.

Any questions, contact Devie Ellis



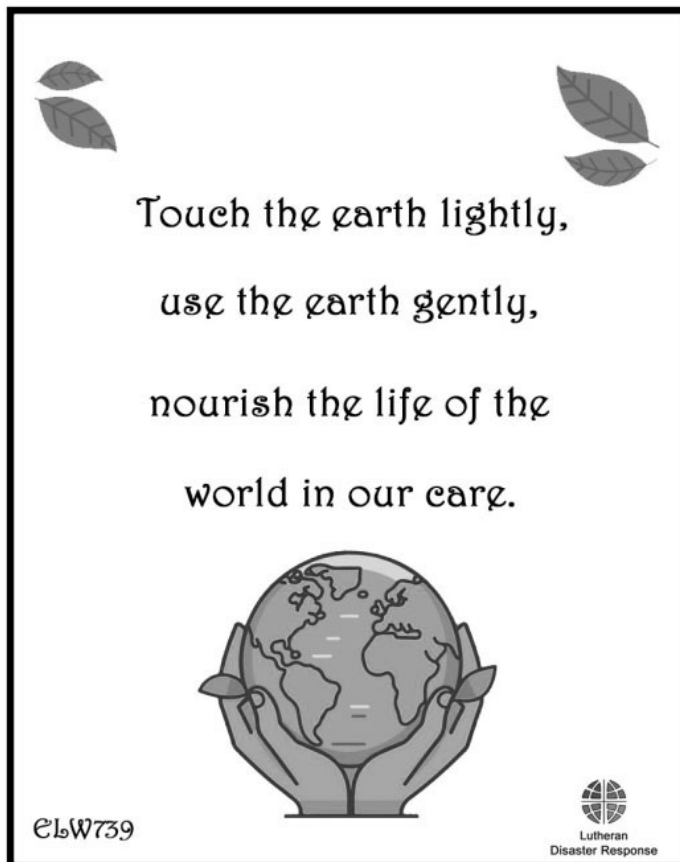
We continue to support those locally who have food insecurity by collecting food items for the Community of Good Neighbors. We are primarily collecting **CEREAL** - non sugary types. This is what they are in most need of. Collection bins are in the Narthex.

**HOPE**  
*and*  
**HEALING**

Christian Cancer Support

For anyone affected by a cancer diagnosis,  
Linda Sokoly can give support, through  
phone calls, e-mail, texts or 1:1  
In person conversations and prayers.

If you or someone you know is in need  
of support, or if you have questions  
please contact Linda through the  
church office at (716) 832-5720  
or ... [augustchurch@yahoo.com](mailto:augustchurch@yahoo.com)



Prepared with garden gloves, rakes, seeds, shovels... and other gardening equipment, on Earth Day, our “garden crew” weeded, planted sunflower seeds and other flower seeds. They, also, collected litter, cut down branches, raked, and trimmed... about 8 tall bags full of debris! Some returned several times to “finish” the cleaning. Much of the planting happened in the front garden where our church sign is. Come visit the young plants that are popping up!!!

**THANK YOU, STEWARDS OF CREATION!!!**



**LUTHERAN  
CHARITIES  
GOLF CLASSIC**

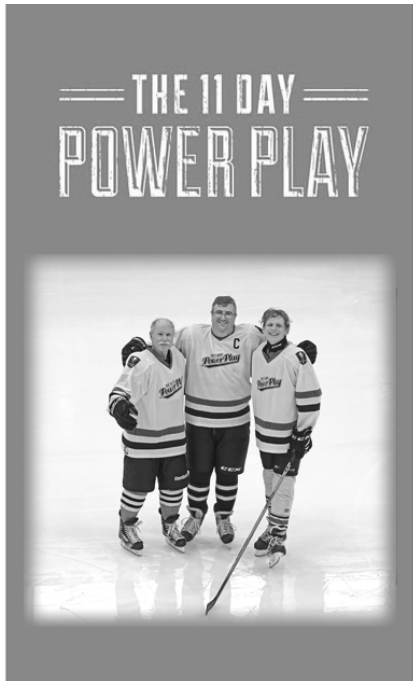
**JOIN US ON THE LINKS**  
for EXCLUSIVE USE of the



**PENDLETON  
CREEK  
GOLF CLUB**  
North Tonawanda, NY

**JUNE 30, 2025**

Register Online at  
[www.WNYLutheranCharities.org](http://www.WNYLutheranCharities.org)  
or get a mail-in registration form from any  
Lutheran Charities representative.



The beneficiaries of this  
11 day Marathon:

Make-A-Wish  
Western New York

Camp Good Days and  
Special Times

Roswell Park  
and  
Oishei Children's Cancer  
and Blood Disorders  
Program

## Fundraiser

Tom, Charlie and Gary Kerr and their “*Sunday Night Pickup Team*” are skating again (3rd year) to raise funds for Roswell, Make-A-Wish, Camp Good Days and Oishei Children’s Hospital, on Wednesday, June 25 th at 12:00 PM through 3:00 PM at the downtown Harbor Center. If you wish to donate. Please see Tom, Charlie or Gary Kerr. All are welcome to attend this event.



## **Lutheran Youth / ELCA WILD WONDERS DAY CAMP**

Lutheran Youth is partnering with Lutheran churches across Western New York to bring our community four “wonder-filled” weeks of summer day camp! Wild Wonders Day Camp is designed for youth ages 5-11 to explore the wonders of God’s creation through exciting games, hands-on crafts, and engaging weekly themes. Day Camp Host Location: St. John Lutheran Church, 6540 Main St, Williamsville 14221

Drop-Off: 8:00-8:30 AM | Pick-Up: 3:00-3:30 PM / Cost: \$200/week (camperships and multiple child discounts available).

Visit ([www.LutheranYouthWNY.org](http://www.LutheranYouthWNY.org)) to learn more and register!

### **Summer 2025 Camp Themes & Dates**

**Week 1: June 30 - July 3 – *World of Wonder***

**Week 2: July 7 - July 11 – *Brick by Brick***

**Week 3: August 18 - August 22 – *Wonder Kingdom***

**Week 4: August 25 - August 29 – *Game On!***



# Around the Area

## **Trinity Old Lutheran Church**

3445 Sheridan Drive

Amherst, New York 14226

Phone: 716-836-4868 or 716-836-4990

Email: trinityoldlutheranchurch@gmail.com

### ***On-going Collections at TOL***

Can Tabs for Ronald Mc Donald House in Buffalo

Recycle Cans and Bottles...

Your donations can be placed in the marked container  
or you may also redeem them at  
Bottle and Can Redemption Center  
(2790 Sheridan Drive in Tonawanda).  
TOL has an account there.

Friends of Night People

Collection of new men's socks, and small-size  
hygiene products  
(soap, shampoo, toothbrushes, toothpaste)  
or create care packages.  
Men's seasonal clothing collection.

Dash's Register Tapes for Niagara Health System

## Women's Luncheon Group

The JUNE luncheon will be held at  
Creekview Restaurant 716-632-9373  
5629 Main Street  
Williamsville, NY  
Thursday June 12th at 12:30 pm



The JULY luncheon will be held at  
Howling Rooster Restaurant 716-838-4440  
529 Englewood Avenue  
Tonawanda, NY  
Thursday, July 10th at 12:30 pm

## Support Group for Grieving Parents

This group, specifically for parents of children and grandchildren who have died, meets each month in the Fireside Room on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday (10:00 AM to 11:30 AM) and also on Zoom.  
Coordinators are: Charlie and Diane Schmidtke and Jean Campbell

## Holy Rest Cemetery—Clean-up Day Planned!

Save the date!! A clean-up day is scheduled for **Saturday, July 19!** Volunteers are needed to help with various tasks to help spruce up the grounds. Holy Rest Cemetery, is located at the corner of Pine Ridge Road and E. Delavan Road in the Town of Cheektowaga, NY.



## **Adult Retreat - October 3, 4 and 5 Lake Chautauqua Lutheran Center**

### **Retreat Schedule**

- Friday, October 3**      Gathering begins at 6:00 PM. Program begins at 7:00 PM, followed by socializing and fellowship; bring your own beverages and snacks.
- Saturday, October 4**      Breakfast at 8:30 AM. Programming throughout the day. Evening for socializing and fellowship.
- Sunday, October 5**      Breakfast at 8:30 AM, followed by program and worship. Depart before Noon.

### **Cost and Packages**

**(prices have increased from last year)**

**Option 1:** Friday through Sunday (room for 2 nights and 4 meals):

- One person in a single room: \$210
- One person in double room: \$140
- Couples: \$280

**Option 2:** Friday through Saturday night or Saturday through Sunday (room for 1 night and 4 meals):

- One person in a single room: \$130
- One person in double room: \$95
- Couples: \$190

**Option 3:** Meals only: \$50

If you have any questions please contact: Trinity Old Lutheran at 716-836-4868 or Charlie Schmidtke at 716-694-1335 or his email at [schmidtkecharles@gmail.com](mailto:schmidtkecharles@gmail.com).





**GOOD SHEPHERD  
LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
2669 Sheridan Drive  
Tonawanda, NY 14150

**Phone (716) 832-5390**

**Email:**

**office.gslc.tona@gmail.com**



**GSLC Food Pantry**  
Items of the Month

**For June**

**Canned Chicken  
Chili Seasoning ♦ Brownie Mix**

**THANK YOU** for your continued support.

# MOVIE & FELLOWSHIP NIGHT

**For ADULTS ONLY!**

This film is not child appropriate.

**FRIDAY, JULY 11TH  
6:00 PM**

**FEATURING THE INSPIRATIONAL FILM  
SOUND OF HOPE:  
THE STORY OF POSSUM TROT**

**\*\* BBQ Dinner will be Served; Bring a Dish to Pass \*\***

Brought to You by:

**GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH**

2669 Sheridan Drive, Tonawanda

**Please RSVP by July 9<sup>th</sup> to the church office:**

office.gslc.tona@gmail.com / 716-832-5390



## **Spring Cleaning Includes Closets!**

Please consider donating unwanted clothing  
to the GSLC Clothing Closet!



**Adult ❖ All Sizes ❖ Coats & Shoes too**

Donations can be brought to church on Sundays,  
or during Office Hours.



### **Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Weidner's Chicken Dinner**

**2669 Sheridan Drive, Tonawanda, NY 14150**

**Saturday, June 14, 2025**

**12 pm – sold out**

**Tickets - \$15 – Drive Thru Only**

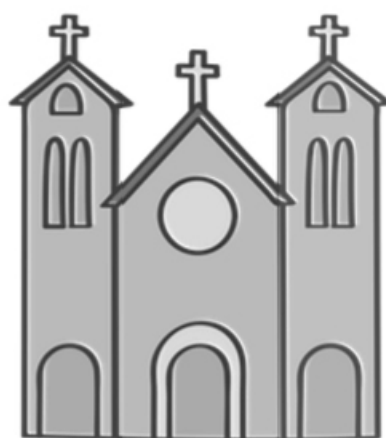
**Includes: ½ chicken, coleslaw, potatoes, roll  
& butter and dessert**

**Tickets available online at [www.gslctona.org](http://www.gslctona.org)  
or day of event (until sold out)**

## **Three-Church Task Force Plans Shared Worship Opportunities**

The Three-Church Task Force recently met to continue building unity and shared purpose among our congregations in this part of Western New York. Guided by the theme of change and that God is with us, the group emphasized the importance of getting to know one another, breaking out in to smaller groups and sharing each other's experiences. A proposal was presented on enhancing worshipping together as a broader faith community with shared events throughout the year. Discussions were positive with details being shared with each of the church councils and will be presented to the wider church communities once approved.

These gatherings are designed to foster deeper relationships and spiritual growth across our congregations. The next task force meeting is scheduled for June 3, where further planning will continue. Stay tuned for more details in upcoming newsletters and bulletins!



**Three Church  
Cooperation  
Committee**

# Happy Father's Day



**Augustana Lutheran Church 3143 Eggert Road Tonawanda, NY 14150**

**Sunday Worship at 9:30 in the church and on Zoom.**

**Contact the church office for a Zoom invite.**

Church Office: (716) 832-5720 / [augustchurch@yahoo.com](mailto:augustchurch@yahoo.com)

**Pastor Fred Kopp:** (716) 984-8541 / [augustchurchpastor@yahoo.com](mailto:augustchurchpastor@yahoo.com)

[www.augustanaonline.org](http://www.augustanaonline.org)

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