

# ZIONEWS

## MARCH 2013

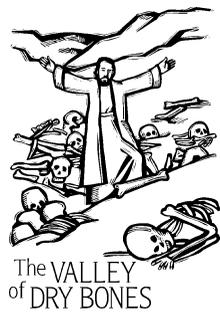
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### PASTOR'S DEVOTIONAL

#### "These Bones Shall Live"



One of my favourite Bible passages is Ezekiel 37:1-14. A great text for the Lenten season we now find ourselves in. Here we read how the spirit of the Lord brought the prophet Ezekiel into a valley of dry bones. Ezekiel, prophesying as God commanded him, saw the bones come together with great noise and rattling and saw sinews, flesh, and skin cover the bones. Finally, the breath or spirit of God came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet – a vast multitude.

I think we can all identify with the stark picture Ezekiel paints for us of the valley of dry bones. Spent, dry, useless bones piled up in the dusty valley crying out, "Our bones are dry, our hope has gone, we are done for."

What has turned your life to dry bones? Extended illness, problems at work, plans that didn't work out? The constant repetition of busy days and busy nights, too short on sleep? Financial difficulties, worry, or anxiety, the loss of a loved one in death, failure in a relationship, a feeling of being rejected, deserted, betrayed or abandoned? Or is it the lack of sunshine, the seemingly unending winter, cold, and snow? Any of these can cause even the liveliest of spirits to feel some depression and weariness.

Yet, there are corporate experiences of the dry valley as well. We can feel like dry bones when our congregation struggles, when we see so much sorrow in the world, when we think of the dusty, dry soil that leads to drought and famine, and starvation, when we see the smouldering ashes in the wreckage and destruction of wartorn places, or when we see so much hate, violence, conflict, and greed surrounding us.

It's important to name and acknowledge our experiences of being dry bones, but even more important, we need to then remember the promise of new life and rescue from the dry valley. That is the wonder, the amazing thing. God does not leave us in the dry valley. God is there caring for us, hurting even as we hurt, weeping, like Jesus wept over Lazarus. Just like the dry bones, God calls us to new life and breathes new energy,

hope, and vision into us.

Lent reminds us and encourages us to take a close look at ourselves and at the dryness of our lives. Lent also encourages us to look at the signs of spring that are around us, the signs and promises of new life.

We are moving from dry bones to living beings. And that, my friends, isn't always an easy thing to do – it takes effort. Sometimes it takes a lot of effort to move toward life again. This is what the Lenten disciplines of prayer, worship, fasting, sacrificial giving, service, are about. They help us reconnect with God, the life-giving spark in our lives. And we are here to help and encourage each other to make that journey.

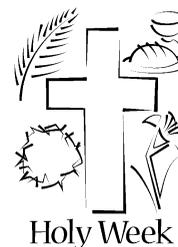
God is still here. You may not feel the wind on your face, but the breath of the Holy Spirit is still here. Your bones may feel dry, but there is living water deep within them. You may not see the flames or feel the heat, but there are embers inside you just waiting to be sparked back into life.

Let us give thanks to God for the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit. Let us boldly ask for the Spirit's presence among us to strengthen our faith, to guide our lives, to empower our serving, and to fill our hearts with joy! And let us also pray that we may be receptive and open to the movement of the Spirit within us and among us.

A blessed Lent to you all!

Rev. Douglas Reble  
Pastor, Zion Lutheran Church

### HOLY WEEK SERVICES



**Jesus Enters Jerusalem:** On Palm Sunday, March 24 we become a part of the parade of people trailing behind Jesus, who is mounted on a lowly donkey. We wave palm branches and shout "Hosanna!" on this day as a way to praise the one who has come to save us all – in great humility. Our joy is mingled with sorrow because we know Jesus is heading into his last days on earth. That is why the Christian Church also calls this day the Sunday of the Passion. Come and worship at 10 AM as we begin Holy Week.

**Jesus Goes To The Upper Room:** On Maundy Thursday, March 28, we climb the stairs to the upper room prepared for Jesus and his disciples, where they share a Last Supper

together. In the bread and wine served here, Jesus gives his very body and blood for the forgiveness of sins. Today we partake of this special meal together as the family of believers – to remember his death until he comes, find grace to help in our time of need, and renew our Christian love. We come together, at 7:30 PM, for worship. Our worship concludes with the stripping of the altar.

**Jesus Dies On The Cross:** On Good Friday, March 29, we stumble through the streets of Jerusalem to witness Jesus on his path to the cross to suffer and die. We recognize that we should be on this road ourselves, but understand that Jesus is the only one who can walk this way if we are truly to be saved from sin and death. We contemplate the cross, express grief over his suffering, and marvel at the sacrifice of the sinless Son of God. We gather for solemn worship at 10 AM.

**Jesus Rises From the Dead:** On Easter Sunday, March 31, we walk with the women to Christ's tomb. There we will see the stone rolled away. We will see Jesus alive again, beckoning us to come, follow him to everlasting life. As followers of Christ, we rejoice on this day that our home is in heaven. Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! Our festive Holy Communion service begins at 10 AM. Come and worship the risen Lord!...P.S. Sunday School is on holiday on Easter morning, so our teachers and children can worship with their family.

## MAUNDY THURSDAY POTLUCK SUPPER

On Maundy Thursday, March 28, we begin what is known in the church as the Great Three Days, the holiest time of the church year. As is our custom, we gather for worship, at 7:30 PM, to remember and celebrate when Jesus gave the gift of the Sacrament of Holy Communion to the Christian church. The first communion took place when Jesus gathered with the disciples around a meal in the Upper Room.



Our Congregational Life Committee, at Zion Church is hosting, a much beloved tradition, a potluck supper on Maundy Thursday, at 6 PM in our Fellowship Hall. This gathering besides celebrating fellowship and friendship, reminds us that our faith journey is one we make together. So come for worship most certainly and join us for supper if you can. Again, a potluck supper. Coffee, tea, and cold drinks will be provided.

## MARCH RECITAL

On Sunday, March 10, beginning at 2:30 PM, Barbara Dunn-Prosser, noted Stratford vocalist will be joined by our own Lynne Hopcraft and Marco Burak. They will be offering a wonderful recital of much loved



music from Mozart to Brahms to Elgar and much more. This is a benefit concert in support of Canadian Lutheran World Relief which carries out international emergency relief, development programming and refugee resettlement on behalf of our Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. A free will offering will be received. Spread the word! A delightful way to spend a Sunday afternoon.

P.S. And don't forget the musical extravaganza that Zion is hosting on Sunday, April 21 at 2 PM. This concert is a fundraising event in support of our Sanctuary Restoration Project taking place this summer. Entrance is by donation. Tell a friend! Bring a friend!

## WORLD DAY OF PRAYER: MARCH 1



This year's World Day of Prayer Service takes place on Friday, March 1, at 11 AM, at St. James Anglican Church with a light lunch to follow. This year's program is written by the women of France around the theme "I Was A Stranger And You Welcomed Me." This is a community service so please know all are welcome. Women, and, of course, men too.

**The World Day of Prayer** is an international ecumenical Christian laywomen's initiative. It is run under the motto "Informed Prayer and Prayerful Action," and is celebrated annually in over 170 countries on the first Friday of March. The movement aims to bring together women and men, of various races, cultures and traditions, in a yearly common Day of Prayer, as well as in closer fellowship, understanding and action throughout the year.

## ZION WOMEN OF FAITH

Sorry I missed the February newsletter. Just a few things I would like to say.

Thank you to all of you who helped in any way with the Christmas shut-in baskets. It was greatly appreciated. Thank you also for those who helped with our Christmas Dinner and program. A special thank you to Santa and his helper. What a big surprise. It was a treat. You are truly a blessing (whoever you are)!



**March 4:** Board meeting at 7 PM

**March 27** is our monthly meeting. Shelley McPhee-Haist is our guest speaker from One Care, who will talk about services One Care provides. All ladies are welcome to join this meeting.

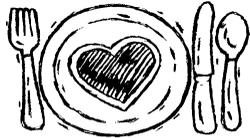
**Roll Call For Learning and Living Kit:** Item this month - 1 bar of soap, and 1 toothbrush (new and wrapped). There is a box at the back of the church you can drop off your items for those who would like to help in our ongoing project.

**Mark your calendar for April 14,** as WOF ladies are putting on a German luncheon as part of our fund raising for the Church Restoration Project. Tickets will be available soon, watch your bulletin.

We will also be doing a quilt raffle with other prizes as well. Tickets will be available sometime in March.

Linda Springer (WOF President)

## FRIENDSHIP MEAL

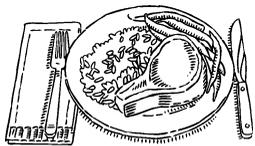


COMMUNITY DINNER

Our Friendship Meal continues to serve people in need in our community. We are now serving around 100 people a month which unfortunately indicates that things are difficult for some people. Our next Friendship Meal is Friday, March 22 at 5 PM. Volunteers are needed to prepare, cook, serve, and clean-up. That could mean you and you are welcome to help out. Indeed, we need you!

Questions? Please call Pastor Robert Hutchison (519-271-5808).

## ZION TABLE FOR SENIORS



Our next gathering of Zion Table For Seniors, our ministry which promotes fun, food, and friendship, takes place on Tuesday, March 26 at 12 noon. Please let Doris Bartlett (519-271-9622) or Phyllis Jeffery (519-271-3668) know by noon, Tuesday, March 19 if you can attend. Lunch cost is only \$10.

Our after dinner presenter is our own Sherry Malcho, a manager with the CNIB. Sherry will speak about the services available for seniors who struggle with eyesight.

## COMMUNION IN LENT



One of the best ways to celebrate and experience the crucified and risen Christ during Lent is to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion. In March we will celebrate Holy Communion on Sundays, March 3, 24 and 31. Our monthly chapel service

with Holy Communion takes place on Wednesday, March 27 at 1:30 PM. This appeals to our seniors and others who find the stairs to the church or a full hour long service difficult to manage.

If you are unable to come to church in Lent to receive Holy Communion, because of sickness or some other life circumstance and you still wish to receive it, don't hesitate to call Pastor Doug or Pastor Karen at the church. They will make every effort to bring it to your home.

## EASTER FLOWERS



As is our custom, at Zion, donations will be accepted so the Women of Faith group can purchase flowers and decorate the church for our Easter celebrations. Please write "Easter Flowers" and your name on a separate envelope and place it on the offering plate or bring it to the church office any weekday morning. Donations will be accepted up to Palm Sunday, March 24. Thank you kindly!

## ZION SPRING HIKE



The Congregational Life Committee has planned a spring hike to take place on Saturday, April 20. The purpose of the hike is two fold. One, to promote fun and friendship among our congregation. Two, to celebrate God's creation in a most beautiful time of year, spring. Last year we had our first Zion hike on the Bruce Trail. Over 25 people attended and it was well-received and enjoyed.

This hike will be a little closer to home. One of the gems of our area is the Hullett Provincial Wildlife Area located between Seaforth and Clinton and just north of Highway #8. The trails meander through interior forests, native grasslands, meadows, and flood plains, while the dykes and viewing stands allow for an elevated view of the ponds and wetlands, located on the paths of two major waterfowl flyways.

This is what you need to know. We leave from the church parking lot at 9 AM. A 45 minute car drive. Yes, we will car pool. After a pleasant hike of 2-3 hours we'll stop in at one of the pubs in Seaforth for lunch. The only cost involved are your lunch cost. We'll be home by mid-afternoon. You need good walking shoes for an easy to moderate trail, drinking water or snack if you need them.

A sign-up sheet will be at the back of the church from Sunday, March 24 - April 14. Please indicate if you can drive and how many seatbelts you have. Questions? Speak with Pastor Doug. He is our hike leader. He promises not to get you lost!



## A STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT

The Old Testament reading for the First Sunday in Lent, Deuteronomy 26:1-11, has something to say about our time of offerings. Specifically, it speaks to our attitude. Sometimes it seems like we only turn to God when things are tough. For some of us it is easy for us to become self-satisfied and pleased with

ourselves when things go our way. So it is important that we not only offer up our gifts, but also an attitude of humility that recognizes God is the source of all gifts, of all good things.

When the time for offering has come, we believers ought to confess: "A wandering Aramean was my ancestor; he went down into Egypt and lived there as an alien..." Even when we have come into our own we are to remember that we are sojourners all, just passing through, and that we come from a long line of folks just passing through. Our deliverance from the slavery of sin is a gift of God, and not something we have achieved in our own strength.

Certainly we strive for success, but whether or not we achieve it, let us remember the earth is God's, and the earth's bounty is God's. We are ourselves wanderers, resident aliens. In this, the season of Lent, let our humility be genuine, not feigned. Let our gratitude be bountiful, not begrudged. Let our gifts be given in earnest, and not for appearance's sake. Let us join together, joyfully, as those who are liberated, and let us joyfully take the part of sojourners, refugees, resident aliens, and all who are oppressed, recognizing that these are our sisters and brothers.

Something to think about!

P.S. Listed below is how you blessed others through Zion Church in 2012:

\$5,000 and over - (9) 8	\$2,500 - \$5,000 - (20) 19
\$1,000 - \$2,500 - (93) 91	\$750 - \$1,000 - (37) 32
\$500 - \$750 - (62) 54	\$300 - \$500 - (44) 40
\$100 - \$300 - (70) 82	\$0 - \$100 - (130) 133

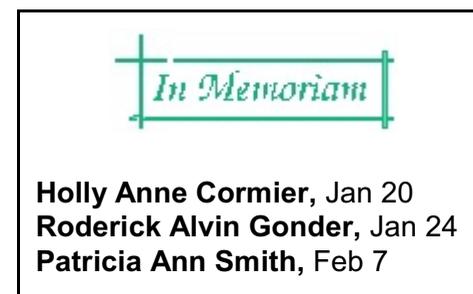
Above is the distribution of gifts given to Zion in 2012. Please notice the breakdown of these givings. Is it possible that you can move up to the next category? Prayerfully reflect on this and don't forget these words from St. Paul where he writes: "Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God."

Number in brackets = numbers for 2012

## MARCH 2013 VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers assist with our Sunday morning worship services. Listed below are those who serve in March as a reminder and as a thank you for serving.

Date	Communion Assistants	Greeters	Readers	Usher Captains	Counting Captains
41335	Sister Jean Widmeyer & Wayne Young	Mike & Julie Drake	Sister Jean Widmeyer	Tom Cosstick	Audrey Miller
41342	N/A	Brandyn & Casey Eckhardt	Fritz Steigmeier	Tom Cosstick	Audrey Miller
41349	N/A	Wayne & Linda Faulhafer	Marilyn Sylvester	Darrell Renecker	Rob Illman
41356	Janet Ahrens & Pastor Doug	Andrew & Lindsey Ehgoetz	Jim Stanley	Darrell Renecker	Rob Illman
41363	David Bennewitz & Liz Bomasuit	Paul & Norma Hansen	Bill Sylvester	Brian Wilker	N/A

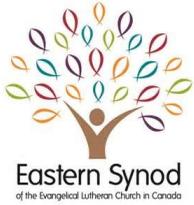


IT'S A

## WONDERFUL SYNOD

At our recent Annual Meeting, a discussion and motion about benevolence offerings was held. It became apparent to me that people don't always understand what benevolence offerings are used for. With the help of Jeff Pym, Director of Stewardship for our Eastern Synod, I share the following.

Pastor Doug



**The movie “It’s a Wonderful Life” is a Christmas favourite in many households. The unlikely hero, George Bailey, finds himself in a crisis and contemplates suicide. His guardian angel grants George’s wish never to have been born and together they visit a Bailey-less version of his community. After seeing this dark alternative world George renounces his suicidal wish, decides that his life has had value after all, and returns to present reality.**

**Individuals and congregations donate one and a half million dollars annually to fund the work of the wider church. People sometimes ask: “What good does that money do? Couldn’t we get along just fine without a synod or national church?”**

**Let’s imagine what congregational life would be like if the wider church had never been born.**

#### **Congregations**

**Without the Synod, there would be no funds to buy land, pay a mission pastor’s salary or subsidize a newly formed congregation in its early years. Is your congregation less than 100 years old? If so, there’s a strong likelihood it might not even exist today if the Synod hadn’t been there to act as midwife at its birth. How would congregations worship? Without the ELCIC and our sister church in the U.S. there would be no distinctly Lutheran worship books. Without the Synod there would be no seminars introducing church musicians and worship leaders to new hymns, liturgies, sacramental practices or church art.**

**If the Synod had never been born, there would be no outside resources for youth and young adult ministry. There would be no church camps, no youth gatherings, no programs on university campuses, no websites connecting Lutheran students. There would be no scholarship programs to assist students entering post-secondary education. How many of today’s clergy and lay leaders give credit to these programs for nurturing and forming their faith? Without these programs, where would congregational leaders come from?**

#### **Pastors**

**Congregations would have pastors, but they would not have been shaped into the Lutheran tradition. Without a wider church, who would establish standards for ministry? Who would maintain programs to recruit and support pastoral candidates? Where would pastors be educated? Waterloo Lutheran Seminary was created by the Synod in 1911 and to this day a significant proportion of its operating budget comes in the form of a synodical grant. No Synod, no seminary.**

**In the absence of a wider church, who would ordain pastors? Who would assist congregations in the process of calling a pastor suited to fill a ministerial vacancy?**

**Without the Synod there would be no ongoing professional development for clergy, no retreats or conferences. And if a pastor encountered a personal or vocational crisis, who would be there to provide counseling or financial assistance? When a congregation sought health, dental, life insurance or pension benefits for its pastor, the costs would surely be higher for an individual person than for a group of several hundred.**

#### **Impact in the World**

**Public institutions such as hospitals, social service agencies and universities can all trace their origins back to the church. (Both Wilfrid Laurier University and the University of Waterloo have their roots in the Eastern Synod). Social movements that started in the churches include the abolition of slavery, civil rights and the end of apartheid, the concept of socially responsible investing, and the treaty banning land mines, in which a graduate of our seminary played a key leadership role not many years ago. Advocating and organizing on behalf of the wider social good is something that churches have always done.**

**Could congregations accomplish these things acting on their own? Not likely. Strength and influence come from many individuals and organizations banding together. Without a wider church there would be no ecumenical movement drawing us closer to other denominations. We would not have relationships with Lutherans and Anglicans around the world. Canadian Lutheran World Relief might exist, but it would not be nearly as effective without the Lutheran World Federation. Who supports the LWF? National denominations. Who provides the resources for the ELCIC? The Synods. Without benevolence offerings to sustain the Eastern Synod the dominoes would fall across Canada and around the world.**

#### **What You Can Do**

**We are called to engage in God’s mission to the world, and most of us do that largely through local ministry. But local ministry cannot do everything, and it will not survive in its present form without a wider church. Regional and national expressions rely on money and leadership from individuals and congregations. We depend on each other.**

**The amount you give in benevolence offerings will determine whether the Eastern Synod and its ministries will exist in the future. Please give generously to maintain not just the institutions and programs, but the many supportive relationships that allow us to be a church in mission for others.**



## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

This past fall, the Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance began implementation of Person and Family-Centred Visiting Guidelines under which families and other partners in care are welcome 24 hours a day according to the patient preference, condition and care needs. These flexible guidelines are designed to balance the patient's needs and the health care teams responsibilities to provide timely treatments and procedures and will strengthen the partnership between patients, families, and health care providers.

To learn more go to the Person and Family-Centred Visiting Guidelines available on the HPHA website at [www.hpha.ca](http://www.hpha.ca)

**P.S. Pastor Doug can only visit Zion members and friends if you let him know they are in the hospital. Never assume. He'd rather be told twice and many times so no one in our church family goes without pastoral care. Thank you.**

## LAY SPIRITUAL RETREAT



This year's Eastern Synod Lay Spiritual Retreat takes place from Friday evening, April 12 to Sunday afternoon, April 14 at the Mt. Carmel Spiritual Centre in Niagara Falls. The cost is \$215 per person which includes room and food costs. The spiritual directors are the Rev. Hans and Katharine Borch and Vicar Jennifer Wirt. This year's theme is "Just Three Things: What God Requires Of Us." Bishop

Michael Pryse is the host.

Please join this event for community, conversation, contemplation, worship, and renewal. Information and registration forms are available at [www.easternsynod.org](http://www.easternsynod.org) or you can contact registrar Prinja Gingrich at 519-508-5652 or [anp.gingrich@rogers.com](mailto:anp.gingrich@rogers.com)

## WHAT IN THE WORLD ARE LUTHERANS DOING?



During times when finances are tight, there is a natural tendency to look inwards and take steps to ensure that our own home and family are safe and secure. At the same time, we are challenged by our calling as Christians to be neighbours to those in need. Like the Samaritan on the road to Jericho, Lutherans in Canada have answered that call through their

support for Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR). Throughout 2013 we will be sharing, from time to time, good news stories from CLWR highlighting its work around the world. Read. Enjoy. Give.

### FOOD SECURITY FOR CHIANDAME VILLAGE, MOZAMBIQUE

*(Chiandame is a village of roughly 1,507 inhabitants located in Mozambique's Tete Province. Here, CLWR is working with the Lutheran World Federation to improve the livelihoods of local farmers such as Lazaro Silva Sobrinho. Here is his story.*

**Lazaro is 58 years old and married. He and his wife have nine children. Before 2005, the year the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) started to form Strategic Action Groups (SAGS) in Chiandame, Lazaro was finding it difficult to earn enough income from his land to support his family. In fact, during the rainy season from August to February, he had to off-farm odd jobs to buy food.**

**During those times, his primary crop was cabbage. "Annual production," he recalls, "was 1,500 heads at most. My disposable income per year was, at most, 2,000 meticaís." (About CDN\$70).**

**With the help of the LWF, Lazaro and neighbouring farmers began to see the benefits of working together towards a common goal. Through their SAG, they received training in basic techniques for sustainable agriculture and were supplied with agricultural inputs such as motor and pedestal pumps, watering cans, hoes, machetes and seeds to plant beans, cabbage, tomatoes, onions, corn, pineapple and pumpkin. Education, though, extended beyond farming techniques. SAG members were given information about the prevention of HIV/AIDS, primary health care and home care, and how to prepare nutritious meals from the crops they were growing.**

**Lazaro was quick to implement his new-found knowledge. "Thanks to these new agricultural practices," he says, "I now produce more than fifty 50kg bags of Irish potatoes per year. With this amount, it is possible to feed my family and still have leftovers. That's how I started to sell surplus yield in order to ensure savings for the purchase of new inputs in the following year."**

**Lazaro also learned the advantages of crop diversification. Before, he had no livestock and he used his land primarily to grow maize. Now he plants crops such as beans, cabbage and tomatoes, and has expanded to create a small orchard of fruit trees that produces tangerines, apples, peaches, bananas, oranges and lemons.**

**It is hard not to feel the pride of accomplishment in his voice. "At this time I have**

**10 cattle. I opened an account at Bank Terra to deposit my money and have 15,000 meticais (US \$517) saved. With income from these activities, I am able to keep my five children still at home in school, buy school supplies and pay monthly wages to the people who take care of my cattle.”**

**While there once was a time when Lazaro could not grow enough food to feed his family, he now looks to a brighter and sustainable future. “My plan,” he says, “is to build a better home for my family. I have already started to manufacture bricks for this purpose. I also want to increase my agricultural production and will buy a pump for irrigation. My goal by 2014 is to buy a car to facilitate the flow of my products to other markets.”**