

ZIONEWS

SEPTEMBER 2011



A publication for the family of Zion Lutheran Church
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PASTOR'S DEVOTIONAL

"SEPTEMBER CHALLENGES COME AGAIN"

I don't know about you, but when September rolls around, a predictable battle surfaces in my life. It is the battle associated with re-engagement. Summer is over - more or less. The fall schedule starts to move into high gear. Responsibility begins tugging at my sleeve and I want nothing more than to resist. I want to hold onto the illusion that I can remain on holidays permanently and be answerable to nothing and nobody. I want to avoid living under any external claims upon my life.



Usually there is enough space in the summer months to find opportunity to "kick back" and enjoy some of those lazy, hazy days associated with this time of year. And it is possible, when this happens, to think we are most alive in these moments. What is more, we get plenty of affirmation from the culture that tells us this is the way it should be. So, when September and the fall schedule start to call us back to our roles and responsibilities, the internal battle can begin.

But the battle has even larger implications. One of the writers I was reading recently pointed out that one of the great fictions of our age is the notion of a person without a role. It is the idea that we are most fully moral when we have divested ourselves of all external claims upon ourselves. But, the writer argued, this is a fiction. The liberal self, detached from any history or any claim upon the self other than the claims one has personally chosen, does not exist. All of us are busy being determined by something. Even the claim that I am living only "for myself" is an externally imposed claim fostered by the current culture. So, he argued, the question is not, "Will I serve some purpose larger than myself?" – for freedom from such determination is impossible. The question is, "Will the master whom I serve be true or false?"

So, when it comes right down to it, my little battle associated with September has far greater implications. The challenge of September is actually calling me back to the

realization that, as a baptized Christian, I have been grasped by something greater than myself. I am owned, claimed, commandeered for larger purposes. I am called to speak and enact the word of God among God's people and in the world. It is a reality that never goes on holiday. It is a reality that gives meaning and purpose to my life. When I am engaged in this vocation I am most alive.

What is more, when all of us in the church allow our lives to be so grasped by this external claim upon our lives as the community of the baptized, then the church also comes alive and the work of the Holy Spirit can begin once more to work the marvelous deeds of the kingdom through us.

Yes, summer is nearly over, the fall schedule is heating up and the call of the Word of God is anxious to lay its claim upon our lives once again. How shall we respond?

Peace be with you,

Rev. Douglas Reble
Pastor, Zion Lutheran Church

VICAR'S WORD

God speaks...sometimes by email...sometimes thru fasting...

"I know what it is to have little, and I know what it is to have plenty. In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being well-fed and of going hungry, of having plenty and of being in need.
Philippians 4:12



I must confess, I love our digital world. Sure, this new media can get in the way of good old-fashioned face-to-face human interaction, but it also allows us to stay connected with one another when it is not possible otherwise. I have discovered that this technology does not only keep us connected with each other, it can also be used to connect with God.

I carry with me a number of different electronic versions of the bible that can be read anytime, anywhere. I also have a devotional app on my phone and computer called the three-minute retreat (link below). I find it a useful way to spend a few intentional minutes with God whenever I want. I also have the daily lectionary readings emailed to my phone to remind and encourage me to read scripture daily. God speaks to us in many different ways so it is not surprising that God would make use of digital media as well.

I recently went to see “The Grapes Of Wrath” at the Stratford Festival. I was alone so I used the time during the intermission to check my email. In my in-box was the lectionary reading for that day. It was Philippians 4:10-15, a most appropriate reading to reflect on as I watched the story of the Joad family unfold before me. If you have not seen the play or read the novel, it is the story of an Oklahoma farm family who (like many others during the Dust Bowl migration of the 1930's) are driven off their family farms by drought and corporate greed. They head for what they are told is the “Promised Land.” Here they only find more hardship and a struggle to uphold their dignity.

The play and the passage from Paul’s letter reveal that I do not really know what it means to have little. My only sense of what it means to have little comes from the experience of others. I have heard the stories of how people attempted to get by during the great depression. I have seen the news reports of the over 12 million suffering in Africa due to the worst drought in over sixty years. I have smelled the inside of a real working soup kitchen providing for the hungry and homeless here in southwestern Ontario. However, I have never personally felt the pain of hunger.

In the “Grapes Of Wrath,” those who have never hungered easily look down on those who do. The Joad’s quickly become the “other” and are seen as less than human. Paul’s words are a reminder that many of us do not know the secret of being well fed and of going hungry, of having plenty and of being in need. I am writing this reflection during Ramadan, the Islamic month of fasting. Ramadan is used by Muslims to teach patience, spirituality, humility and submissiveness to God. An important but lesser known practice of Ramadan is Charity. It is a common practice for Muslims to give food to the poor and homeless at all times of the year, but even more so during Ramadan. By fasting, they come closer to knowing the secrets of being well fed and of going hungry. As September ushers in a new programming year in our church, what spiritual practice will we put into place so that we learn the secrets?

Vicar Steve Hoffard

Link to the 3-minute retreat:

www.loyolapress.com/3-minute-retreats-daily-online-prayer.htm



RALLY SUNDAY & PIG ROAST

A much loved tradition, at Zion, returns on Sunday, September 11, as our congregation gathers for Rally Sunday which marks the beginning of another program year for the congregation. On this Sunday, our good friend Steve Hoffard will be installed officially as our vicar for

2011-2012 and our Sunday School teachers and helpers blessed for their ministry of service and teaching.

Of course, our traditional pig roast luncheon follows the service. All are welcome! Why not invite a friend, be they a member of the Zion Church family or not.

P.S. Our regular worship and Sunday schedule begins on Sunday, September 18. Worship is 9 AM and 11 AM. Sunday School happens during the 9 AM service. A fellowship time of refreshment and visiting is offered between the services.

ZION FALL HIKE



The Congregational Life Committee has planned a fall hike to take place on Saturday, October 15. 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, autumn with the leaves changing colour.

This is what you need to know. We leave from the church parking lot at 8 AM and travel one hour to Hilton Falls on the Bruce Trail. Hike leader is Richard Reble (yes, Pastor Doug’s brother) who has walked the complete Bruce Trail three times. After a pleasant hike of 3 hours or so, we head to our own Lutheran Camp Edgewood, which is nearby, for lunch and a beverage. Cost is \$15 per person. We’ll be home by suppertime. 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, September 11-October 2. We will car pool so please indicate if you can drive and how many seatbelts you have. Questions? Speak with Pastor Doug at zionlc@golden.net or 519-271-8527 or in person of course.



NEW MOM’S GROUP AT ZION

Years ago, Zion had a Mom’s Group which was well received. Shirley Bonn, who was one of the conveners of that group is taking the lead in starting a new Mom’s group.

Their first meeting will be on Monday, September 19 from 9 AM to 11:30 AM. Shirley already has some activities planned for the next few months and would like to have more ideas from our moms. We all meet in the boardroom with the children playing in the nursery next door.

If you have any questions, please call Shirley at 519-271-1631 or the church at 519-271-8527.



BLESSING OF BACKPACKS

On Sunday, September 18, Pastor Doug invites the children of Zion to bring the backpacks that they use for going to and from school to church. Pastor Doug will bless the backpacks which seems like a fitting thing to do, in September, when our children head back to school. May God bless our children with an eagerness to learn.

P.S. Parents this notice is to remind you to remind your child to bring their backpacks on Sunday, September 18. The blessing will take place during the children's time before the kids head off to Sunday School.

EMERGENCY APPEAL FOR DROUGHT VICTIMS



The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC), through its partnership with Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR), is appealing to its members for financial support to assist with relief efforts for drought-affected people in East Africa.

The lack of rain in Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya has created food and water shortages that threaten the lives of 11 million people. The World Food Program reports that tens of thousands of Somalis have died from starvation. Thousands more Somalis suffering from malnutrition, dehydration, and exhaustion arrive in Kenyan and Ethiopian refugee camps every day seeking aid, swelling the camps far beyond their capacity and causing a major strain on resources.

“Our thoughts and prayers are with all those affected by the drought in East Africa,” says ELCIC National Bishop Susan C. Johnson. “Having been in Ethiopia just this past April, I have seen first hand the devastating effects that the lack of rain, dry conditions and land erosion has had in this region, as well as the effective work of CLWR and the Lutheran World Federation World Service in addressing these needs. It is important that we assist our brothers and sisters by donating to this appeal.”

CLWR has issued an appeal that will provide support in the region in the following ways:

- ✦ Distributing over \$1.5 million of food (1,900 tons) in Ethiopia in partnership with the Canadian Foodgrains Bank and the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) in Ethiopia.

This large-scale emergency food aid project is responding to immediate needs for relief in the drought-stricken district of Goro, a district in the Oromia region of Ethiopia. Over 18,000 people will benefit from the distribution.

- ✦ Through their partnership with the LWF, in supporting refugee camps in the region. The LWF-managed Dadaab camp in Kenya is hosting over 1,300 new arrivals per day, most from Somalia. LWF camp interventions include the distribution of nine tons of flour mix for supplementary feeding of children and the elderly; the distribution of clothes, slippers, and sanitary wear for women; and regular water deliveries using a 7,000-litre truck.
- ✦ Providing assistance to people still in Somalia, specifically to newly displaced people in Mogadishu and to those affected by drought in the Gedo region. This support is administered through our partnership with ACT Alliance and will include the distribution of food, water, sanitation, and shelter.

“We have extreme confidence in our experienced partners on the ground in East Africa,” says Robert Granke, CLWR’s executive director. “We know every donation sent to CLWR will be used wisely.”

CLWR has worked in Africa for years on food and water security projects and will continue to work toward sustainability in the region. CLWR’s five year development goal in our Africa programs is to provide safe water supply, storage capacity and/or irrigation to over 150 communities in Ethiopia, Mozambique, and Zambia. CLWR is training African families in sustainable agriculture and livestock management, and providing them with the tools they need to feed themselves and their families. CLWR’s ongoing development work in the region helps to mitigate the effects of crises such as drought and famine by building food and water security that lasts.

P.S. Enclosed with this newsletter is a Canadian Lutheran World Relief offering envelope. Please respond to this appeal as you are able and as you have been blessed. It would be helpful if you would write “2011 East Africa Drought” on the envelope. If you receive our newsletter by email, you can pick up an offering envelope in the pews or from the church office. Thank you for responding.

CHOIR RETURNS: WANT TO JOIN THEM?

Zion Senior Choir seems to be defined by four key elements; friendship and growth, service and generosity.

Week by week, singers come together on Thursday evenings to share their time and enjoy each other's company. Making music together is a wonderful path to unexpected friendships. It is also a sure way to challenge yourself to go beyond your old expectations, and to meet new challenges, working together with others.

However, through the choir, God reaches far beyond the personal. Service has been defined as 'giving to others and wanting to make a difference in their lives' (The Virtues Project). In turn, serving others is one of the best ways to serve God; and as created beings, serving and glorifying God is our role in creation. This is a reality on so many levels at Zion.

Generosity, the gift of giving freely, is a true manifestation of love. Like any virtue, generosity requires continual practice; when it comes to generosity of time and ability, choir members seem to have it in spades!

We are richly blessed at Zion, and it is for us to share those blessings with our community and our world.



The Zion Senior Choir rehearses on Thursday evenings, in the Sanctuary, from 7:30-9 PM between September and June. The first rehearsal is September 15th. Please consider coming to sing with us if you feel that is something you would enjoy.

P.S. Any questions for Lynne Hopcraft, our choir director. She can be contacted at hopcrafttutoring@yahoo.com or 519-274-3120. She'd love to hear from you.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY



Prayer Shawl Ministry

The Prayer Shawl Group will start, again, on Monday, September 12 from 2 PM to 4 PM. If anyone would like to join our wonderful group of knitters and crocheters you are most welcome. It certainly is a fun way to enjoy a Monday afternoon. It is also a ministry as shawls and blankets are given to people in hospital and care facilities and people who need a reminder that God loves them unconditionally. For more information, if needed, please contact Lisa Hutchison at 519-271-5808.

SUNDAY SCHOOL SNIPITS



Welcome back students and teachers! Thank you to everyone who said yes to teaching this year. Rally Sunday is September 11 the children will be going to class that day, after the teachers are blessed.

Again we will be having a Special Event each month. Be sure and check the Snip It for details.

If you need envelopes for your child, please see your child's teacher or come to the Sunday School office.

If you would like to join our Teaching team, please call Jan @ 519-271-6073 or Mary-Lou @ 519-273-2268. There are still some spots available.

WOMEN OF FAITH GROUP



September brings the two circles of our Women of Faith group, at Zion, back together after the summer break. Though the Gleaners Circle normally meets the fourth Tuesday of the month in the afternoon and the Mary Martha Circle on the fourth Wednesday evening, this month the two circles come together on Wednesday, September 28 at 7:30 PM. All

the women of our church are welcome. Questions? Contact Mary-Lou Drown at drown_ml@yahoo.ca or 519-273-2268.

Please note that our Women of Faith group will lead the annual ELCIC Praise Offering Service on Sunday, October 16. Trinity Lutheran Church, in Tavistock, hosts the fall conference on Saturday, October 12.

P.S. We are still looking for a new president for the 2012-2013 term. Is God calling you? Speak to Mary-Lou Drown or Pastor Doug.



FRIENDSHIP MEAL MINISTRY

Friday, September 30 is our next meal to share friendship and food with the people of Stratford who need it and seek it. Thank you to the ministers, of Zion, who continue to prepare and serve the meals. Preparation time is usually around 1 PM and serving begins just before 5 PM with clean-up afterwards if you wish to help. This

ministry also qualifies for student service hours for our young people in high school. If you need more information, please contact Ingrid Fraser 519-271-4382.

CAN YOU HELP?



Have you been travelling over these summer vacation months and staying at hotels, motels, and inns? You brought home the small toiletries they supply but have not used them? Well, the Salvation Army could use them on an ongoing basis, for people in need in our community, as they put together "comfort kits." What are needed are bar soap, shampoo, conditioner, shower cap, body wash, toothpaste. The only stipulation is that they haven't been used, they are wrapped, or the seal is not broken.

Questions? Call Verlie Sippel at 519-271-9107. They can be placed in the container at the back of the church, given to Verlie, or dropped off at the church office on weekday mornings.

Baptisms

Bailey D. Ross, son of John & Tina on July 3
Gracie Jean Maxwell Ross, daughter of John & Tina on July 3
John David Maxwell, son of David & Donna on July 9
Alexis Ellen Rose, daughter of Dustin & Jenine on July 10
Allida Avery Lugsdin, daughter of Nicholas & Lorrie on August 28

In Memoriam

Lavina Blatchford on June 20
Verna Roy on July 14
Margaret Greve on July 19
Robert Hastings on July 26



Weddings

Kenneth Richard Brown & Krista Michelle Ehgoetz, September 3
Mark Edward Wolfe & Christina Erin Morrow, September 23



CONFIRMATION MINISTRY

Confirmation classes will soon begin, at Zion, for another year. Designed to help our young people grow in faith and grace, confirmation ministry also prepares them to commit themselves to

God and the Church.

Pastor Doug and Vicar Steve will be meeting with the Grade 7 and 8 youth and their parents who will be a part of this year's confirmation ministry program. We meet, in the chapel, on Thursday, September 15 with the Grade 7 group gathering at 7 PM and the Grade 8 group at 8 PM. Classes, themselves, begin on Thursday, September 22.

ZION QUILTERS



Another beloved group, at Zion, affectionately known as the "Quilting Queens," are our quilters who meet on Wednesday mornings from 9 AM to 1:30 PM in our Assembly Room. Quilting, once a lost art, has become fashionable again. It is a craft which enhances the beauty in God's creation. Our quilting group, at Zion, always welcomes new members be you experienced or a novice wanting to learn the art of quilting. If you can't stay all morning, not to worry. A couple of hours is just fine. Your presence is what is appreciated. Quilting begins on Wednesday, September 14. Again, all are welcome!

BEAVERS & CUBS REGISTRATION



An important program for the children of our congregation and community is our 17th Zion Group which is sponsored by Zion. A co-ed group open to boys and girls, between age 5-11, the Beavers and Cubs meet on Tuesday evenings, at the church, at 6:45 PM.

Registration for all the Beaver, Cub, and Scout groups, in the city of Stratford, takes place on Tuesday, September 6 from 6:30 PM to 8 PM at the Rec. Complex. If you miss that, simply come to the first Beaver and Cub gathering on Tuesday, September 13 at 6:45 PM.

If you have any questions, please contact Wayne Hinz (519-271-8245) or Pearl Alles (519-273-0457).

ALZHEIMER COFFEE BREAK DAY



The Alzheimer Coffee Break is an annual grassroots initiative which raises funds to support the programs and services of our local Alzheimer Society here in Perth County. Currently more than 1,400 people in Perth County suffer from this disease and related dementias. The Alzheimer Society exists to help these people and their families.

Our Alzheimer Coffee Break Day, at Zion, will take place on Sunday, September 25 between the services as a part of our fellowship time. All donations big or small will be accepted. Plan to attend! Spread the word!

ZION TABLE FOR SENIORS



Zion Table For Seniors, a beloved ministry at Zion, which promotes fun, food, and friendship returns on Tuesday, September 20 at 12 noon. Please let Doris Bartlett (519-271-9622) or Phyllis Jeffery (519-271-3668) know by Thursday, September 15 if you can attend. Lunch cost is only \$10. A deal by any name!

Our special after dinner guest, to kick off the program year, is Eduard Klassen with his Paraguayan Folk Harp and his unique blend of gentle humour and sincere faith. All are welcome!

SEPTEMBER VOLUNTEERS

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

DATE	COMMUNION ASSISTANTS	GREETERS	READERS	USHER CAPTAINS	COUNTING CAPTAINS
Sept 4	10 Wayne Hinz & Beryl Horst	10 Don & Sharon Davis	10 Verne Hammer	10 Tom Cosstick	Bill Hoffard
Sept 11	N/A	10 Mark & Judy Waymouth	10 Joanne Wallace	10 Irv Riehl	Bruce Sippel

Sept 18	9 Ed Illman & Caroline Lorentz 11 Janet Ahrens & Linda Springer	9 Brayden Broadfoot 11 Emilie Bourassa	9 Ian Watson 11 Jake Hemstock	9 Darrell Renecker 11 Irv Riehl	Bruce Sippel
Sept 25	N/A	9 Jacob VanScheyndel 11 Nathan Festoso	9 Linda Weitzel 11 Connor Hendricks	9 Steve Lamont 11 Mike Bomasuit	David Frier

ZION CHURCH FINANCIAL REPORT

	<u>Current</u>	<u>Benevolence</u>
Monthly Requirements	\$27,419.25	\$4,504.66
July Income	\$23,811.00	\$3,512.50
July Expenses	\$27,004.33	\$3,512.50

CURRENT FUND DEFICIT (as of July 31, 2011): \$32,948.75



PLEASE NOTE:

As is custom for this congregation (and most), we come out of the summer with a deficit in our Current Fund. It is a little larger than usual due to property work needed on our aging facility (ie floor tiles replaced, plumbing leak in washrooms, boiler repair, painting, etc). It is now time to get caught up as we head into the last four months of the year. God has so richly blessed us and this congregation. Let us give to God as God has given to us.

What has God given us? Read the following:

I wonder if people laughed when Jesus told his parable of the unforgiving servant (read Matthew 18:21-35, the gospel reading for September 11 this year). On the one hand the servant was owed about a third of a year's pay by his fellow servant. That's a lot of money, but it's not out of the question that sooner or later he'd have been repaid. But the amount he owed his master was 20 bazillion gazillion dollars – in other words, a meaningless number. No master would have lent his slave that kind of money. There was simply no way it could ever have been paid back.

But Jesus wanted to demonstrate God's boundless love and generosity and limitless capacity to forgive. The people who listened to Jesus would have laughed because they knew what it was like to owe money, and they knew that if anyone has been forgiven a huge sum the only possible response is to forgive what others owe you. The normal response to overwhelming mercy and goodness is to pass it along. So the idea of someone not getting that they've been forgiven and should therefore forgive others is absurd. That's not how people act. It's a laugh line. With a serious point.

Get it? God has been given to you, beyond measure. You've been given 20 bazillion gazillion dollars worth of joy, mercy, and love. What would you give in exchange for that? How will you respond?

Something to think about!

COME RAISE YOUR VOICE; RETELL, RECLAIM, REJOICE!

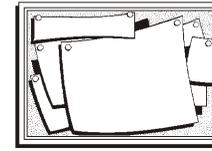
Raise your voice in a Synod-wide gathering on **October 23, at 2 PM!** This special celebration marks the conclusion of our Synod and Seminary anniversary year of *Remembering for the Future*.

Voices from across our synod are converging on St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Kitchener, Ontario, to create a mass choir which will sing Bach Cantata No. 80, based on the Reformation chorale *A Mighty Fortress*. And mighty it will be when choristers are joined by the fifteen piece orchestra all directed by Dr. Peter Nikiforuk. Singers representing nearly every conference from Sudbury to Montreal have made plans to attend.

The Bach Cantata of our Lutheran heritage retells and reclaims the gospel message proclaimed through music that has inspired Christians around the world. Rejoicing in our future will also be pivotal to our worship experience. Integrating today's technology, we will explore our hopes and dreams for the future. Your participation in congregational song and prayer will be a vital element in our worship together. This special worship celebration will also be taped for broadcast on CKCO TV on Reformation Sunday.

Please come and add your voice to this unique worship gathering as we close our anniversary year. Mark you calendars for **Sunday, October 23, 2 PM at St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Kitchener, ON.**

It is not too late to become a choir member. For nitty-gritty details, or to register to participate, contact Choir Coordinator Scott Knarr at Mount Zion, Waterloo, e-mail: scott.knarr@mzlc.ca Or call him at Mount Zion at 519-886-5820. Rehearsal schedules and recordings of individual parts can be found at <http://www.mzlc.ca/worship-music/synodchoir>



ZION CHURCH BULLETIN BOARD

The following items have come into the church office over the summer months. We share them with you for your interest and possible response. Please note:

1. **Meals-on-Wheels Volunteers Needed:** The Zion team who drive for the Meals-on-Wheels program for One Care is in need of more volunteers. For more information or to say yes, please contact Heather Wickenheiser at bobwick@sympatico.ca or 519-271-3187.
2. **9/11 10th Anniversary Memorial Concert:** The Stratford Concert Choir begins its 30th season with a 10th anniversary concert in commemoration of those who died in the September 11th, 2001 terrorist attacks in New York and Pennsylvania. This concert will take place on Sunday, September 11 at 3 PM, at St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church in Stratford. Admission to this event is free, with a voluntary collection taken for the Red Cross Canadian Japanese Relief Fund to help those who suffered earlier this year in the Japanese earthquake and tsunami. The concert features a performance of Faure's Requiem.
3. **Solar Energy & Other Greening Initiatives Open House:** Bethany Lutheran Church, 175 Springbank Ave., Woodstock extends an invitation to attend an Open House, at their church, on Saturday, September 10 from 2 PM to 4 PM. There will be a formal presentation on how Bethany went solar, a chance to learn how you can reduce your energy bills at your home or business. Bethany is excited about their greening initiatives to take care of God's creation and we celebrate with them.
4. **Emotions Anonymous:** Using the 12 step program, there is a new program, in London, entitled Emotions Anonymous. They meet Tuesday evenings, at 7 PM, at St. Mark's Church, 1320 Wilton Ave in London. The only requirement is a desire to be well emotionally. To learn more go to infof3498fjsd@emotionanonymous.org or email at londonea@hotmail.com