

A publication for the family of Zion Lutheran Church, 202 Erie St., Stratford, ON N5A 2M8

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PASTOR'S DEVOTIONAL

"Like obedient children, do not be conformed to the desires that you formerly held in ignorance. Instead, as he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct; for it is written, 'You shall be holy, for I am holy.'" – 1 Peter 1:14-16.



Every Sunday throughout the years of my childhood, I would join my parents in our family pew (fifth row from the front on the pulpit side) at our family church in North Plainfield. It was a charming sanctuary that still evokes fond memories; but those memories also include the fear that some of the stained-glass windows in that worship space induced in me. They were depictions of some of the great saints of the church: St. Peter (the congregation's namesake), St. Matthew, St. Luke, St. John, and many of the other apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. They were presented in a very traditional manner, with stern faces and eyes that seemed to stare at me as I sat (and often squirmed) between my parents on those hard wooden pews. Those saints seemed to be somehow different and superior to us mere mortals in the congregation; being a saint seemed to be out of reach to someone who was still learning what it means to be a Christian and how to live according to God's Will at a time when even keeping my room clean and doing my household chores was a challenging task.

That image of saints that I took from the stained-glass windows of my childhood church stayed with me when I went away to university and was discerning the call to ordained ministry that I first experienced at St. Peter's. This discernment process was very difficult for me; how could God possibly want me to be a pastor, to follow in the footsteps of those saints and apostles who were far holier than me? How could I fulfill the expectations of being a preacher of the Word of God when there was no way I could live up to the example those saints had set? I did not see any way that I could adequately fulfill such

a calling; there was no way I could be a saint.

I was about to give up and switch majors when I ran into Dr. Max Nuscher, the university chaplain, as I was walking across campus. Max was very different from the pastors of my home congregation; he was a bright, funny, down-to-earth individual who seemed to be very human, not like the saints of my imagination. I attended worship services and Bible Studies with Max and other Ursinus students and was always inspired by his sermons and witness. Max saw that something was troubling me and invited me to join him at the Student Union for coffee. When I told Max that I was considering switching to another course of study and abandoning my preparations for seminary, he answered with words that I remember to this day: "Jeff, God created you; God knows you better than you know yourself; and if God is calling you to be a pastor God is calling *you*, with all your faults and imperfections. God wants the real Jeff to be God's servant in the world."

Max's words changed the course of my life and made me realize that saints are not larger-than-life figures who are somehow above human experience. Saints are everyday people, with the same faults and imperfections as all of us. The saints of the Bible are vastly different from how they are depicted in works of art or in stained-glass windows; Jesus' disciples were often vain, argumentative, selfish, arrogant, and clueless as to what it meant to be a follower of Christ; we may often wonder why Jesus did not replace them with a better group of adherents. But Jesus saw past their imperfections and shortcomings to persons who, with all of their faults, would still be the ones who would bring his Gospel to the ends of the earth. The call to be "holy" is not something we can achieve on our own; we are made holy in baptism, when we are "*reborn children of God and made members of the church which is the body of Christ*" (ELW Holy Baptism). We are called "*just as I am*" and made holy through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit "*in order that you may proclaim the mighty deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*" (1 Peter 2:9).

1. "To be a saint *is* to be human because we were created to be human. To be a saint is to live with courage and self-restraint ... to live with the hands stretched out both to give and to receive with gladness. To be a saint is to work and weep for the broken and suffering of the world, but it is also to be strangely light of heart in the knowledge that there is something greater than the world that mends and renews ... It is to live a life that is always giving itself away and yet is always full." – Frederick Buechner.

The saints that we will remember on All Saints Sunday – both the saints of Scripture and the saints we have known – were not perfect people; they were called by God in Holy Baptism and made holy through water and the Word so that they could share God’s love with others and give us an example of how we as flawed, imperfect people can be saints to one another in our everyday lives. God does not call us to be “stained-glass saints”; God calls us to be *“a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds”* (Titus 2:14), a people *“who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine”* (Ephesians 3:20). On All Saints Sunday, we give thanks *“for all the saints who from their labours rest”* – the ordinary saints who are called and empowered to do extraordinary things as God’s holy people, our Lord’s everyday saints.

Your fellow saint,
Pastor Jeff Laustsen

COVID-19 - ZION MOVING FORWARD



**Post-
Pandemic
Planning**

As we move into the next phase of reopening, your Congregational Council is making the following announcement:

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Stratford is in favour of implementing a mandatory vaccination policy in order to allow us to proceed to full capacity effective December 5, 2021.

PROOF OF FULL VACCINATION WILL BE REQUIRED FOR ENTRY.

Once the proof has been presented the first time, a record will be kept in our data base and recorded on our sign-in sheet until this requirement is no longer needed under Government Regulations.

**BOOKING IN ADVANCE FOR WORSHIP AND MASKS
WILL CONTINUE TO BE REQUIRED !!**

We are excited to enter this next phase while still ensuring that our members can be confident that they are entering a “safe” environment.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE OCTOBER 2021 CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING



Council Highlights

The October 20, 2021 Congregational Council Meeting was held in-person in the Fellowship Hall and via Zoom conference.

Investigations are continuing regarding the possibility of providing livestreaming for the Sunday worship services.

The Redevelopment Committee has been renamed the "Envisioning Committee" to better reflect our goals. Kevin Tuer, Franklin Famme and Tom Cosstick have volunteered to be the members of this Committee. A Virtual Roundtable is being planned for December 1st to bring together 10 community members; Dr. Mark Harris from Synod, Kevin, Franklin, Tom and possibly other members of Congregational Council.

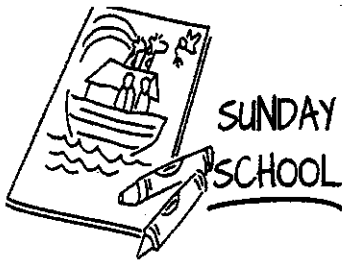
It was decided that the annual deficit letter will be included with the November Newsletter which will be mailed to each member (no emails.) Therefore, the Newsletter will also include the deficit letter, contribution statement as of October 31st and a deficit envelope.

A Bequest in the amount of \$250,000.00 has been received from the Ken Rohfritsch Estate. Based on our current policy, 10% of the Bequest will be forwarded to the Synod Office. In addition, it was approved that \$25,000.00 be disbursed to the Building Fund immediately to increase the depleted balance in this fund. After discussion, it was approved to invest the balance, namely \$200,000.00 with the Evangelical Lutheran Foundation of Eastern Canada (ELFEC) under a separate account designated Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church Special Reserve Fund. This Bequest is administered under a separate agreement with ELFEC and is not part of the Endowment Fund assets. It was also approved that the annual income from this Bequest be disbursed 75% to Zion and 25% retained in the Fund for growth. In addition, it was approved that the 75% of income from this Special Reserve Fund which is paid to Zion annually will be allocated 60% to the Current Fund, 15% to the Benevolence Fund and 25% to the Building Fund.

Donations/offerings, including donations to the Deficit Fund can continue to be completed via our Church website, including an option for E-Transfer, in addition to the

PAR program, mailing cheques or dropping off donations either at the Church office weekday mornings or in the locked mailbox at your convenience.

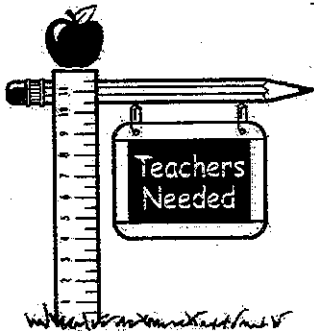
SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS



We are hoping that all Sunday School families could please fill out the attached survey so that we are better able to plan for the return of Sunday School, when it is safe to do so. If for some reason you are unable to complete the survey, you can also email your name, your child(ren)'s name(s), current grade(s), and whether or not they would be participating in Sunday School to Paula at pauley_mcaughton@hotmail.com.

Click here for the survey: <https://forms.gle/bS3dCdiEaSmrnXLEA>

Sunday School Teacher Needed:



for our Grade 5/6 class.

If you are interested, please contact
Paula McNaughton

by email: pauley_mcaughton@hotmail.com
or cell after 6:00 p.m. 519-274-4121 .

Thank you for your continued support.

Paula McNaughton
Sunday School Coordinator

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE



The next meeting of the Endowment Committee will be on
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 25th at 7:00 P.M.

ZION WOMEN OF FAITH



The Executive of Women of Faith met in the Fellowship Hall Wednesday, October 13, 2021 adhering to preventive pandemic conditions.

We discussed the uncertainty of these times as felt by everyone. We pray that God continues to sustain us now and keep us in His loving care through the times to come.

1) Finances

Joanne Cosstick reported \$2,776 in our coffers. These funds are used to purchase greeting cards and stamps. Donations are usually made internally for Zion as well as making donations to our community and abroad. The Christmas Gift to seniors and home bound also come out of this fund. You will get a more comprehensive financial report at year end.

2) Funeral Lunches

Bev Keutsch announced that she will be stepping down from organizing Funeral Lunches. At present we are not offering this option to members of Zion due to pandemic uncertainties. Should the need arise in the future we will re-group and re-organize. Thank you so much Bev for your outstanding leadership. It has certainly been appreciated and welcomed by families of those who have passed!

3) Greeting Cards to Zion Members

Gloria Hinz sends birthday cards to all members 75 years of age. Wedding Anniversary cards are sent to members celebrating 50 years and in 5 year increments thereafter.

Wendy Hansen sends birthday cards to children baptized in Zion up to three years of age. Memory Boxes are also given at Baptism.

Linda Weitzel assures that Get Well Cards, Sympathy Cards and Thinking of You Cards are sent to members of Zion.

4) **Eternity For Today:** *Darlene Illman* has been in touch with those receiving this publication and assuring they will continue to get it.

5) Many thanks to *Janet Ahrens* for her leadership on the Flower Committee! Since the church has not been open to full capacity our flowers and decorations have been minimal. Thank you, *Norma Hanson*, for your creative decorating!

6) **Christmas Gifts**

Christmas Gifts for our seniors and home bound members were discussed. It was decided that we will look into a small gift for each of these members and they will be delivered by our Zion Women of Faith membership.

It was decided that a donation of \$300 be made to the House of Blessing this Christmas.

7) **We are grateful to our members of Women of Faith for their donations which are usually offered at our general meetings. Since we have not been meeting in person you may want to send a cheque to Joanne Cosstick at 535 Albert St., Stratford, ON N5A 3L6. Please make sure your cheque is written payable to Zion Lutheran Women of Faith.**

Joanne has graciously offered to receive membership E transfers sent to her email: tcosstick@wightman.ca. She will be busy at year end getting these tax receipts ready.

Also, please have all bills and any financial information to Joanne by no later than December 30, 2021.

Submitted with Gratitude by Ellen Wolfe, President

ALL SAINTS' SUNDAY

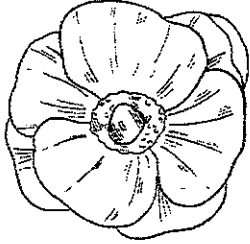
On Sunday, November 7th, our parish, together with Christians around the world celebrate the Festival of All Saints. A time to celebrate the triumph of the Lord of Life Jesus Christ over the power of death, the day is traditionally the time Christians remember those by name who have died since the last All Saints' Day. Indeed it is a good time to remember all our loved ones who have died and to praise our Lord for his victory over death and the grave. Please call to attend this special worship!



On Sunday, November 7th "All Saints' Sunday" we remember all of our loved ones who have died, namely:

- +*Ken Rohfritsch*
- +*Grace Crisp*
- +*Wayne Schneider*
- +*Andrew Gastmeier*
- +*Pearl Zehr*
- +*Tarja Mischler*
- +*Martin Brandt*
- +*Steven Schneider*
- +*Karen Mogk*
- +*Paul Huras*
- +*Hans Beck*
- +*Elsie Dahm*
- +*Gerhardt Wiedmann*
- +*Doreen Rose*
- +*Ardath Michaeli*
- +*Hildegard Grobbecker*
- +*Bea Huras*
- +*Ralph Herman*
- +*Trevar Broderick*
- +*Andrew Skowby*

2021 MARKS THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REMEMBRANCE POPPY



From the last Friday of October until Nov. 11, the Royal Canadian Legion is encouraging Canadians to remember by sporting the Flanders Fields flower.

The annual poppy drive is a chance for Canadians to honour veterans and remember the sacrifices they made for the freedoms we enjoy today.

In 1921, the poppy was adopted as the flower of remembrance, meaning this year marks the 100th anniversary of the remembrance poppy in Canada.

The Royal Canadian Legion estimates 20 million poppies will be distributed by its branches throughout Canada for 2021.

“I think it’s important for every Canadian to remember why we’re here, why we have such a wonderful place to live,” says Allan Jones, president of Royal Canadian Legion Branch 560.

“Over 170,000 Canadians have died in wars since 1812, fighting for our freedom,” Jones says. “So we cannot forget that, we cannot forget them.”

All the money donated will stay within the community and be used directly to support veterans, their families and events.

The annual Remembrance Day campaign is the single largest fundraising effort by the legion.

This year, legion members are hoping their campaign receives more support than last year, with donations down significantly in 2020 due to the pandemic.



Lest We Forget...

As everyone knows, November 11th is Remembrance Day.
In honour of those who gave their lives for us to have what we have today, below is
the famous poem
"In Flanders Fields"

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.*

*We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.*

*Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.*

By: Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae

The Unknown Soldier

By: Lenore Hetrick

If I stood by the tomb of the Unknown Soldier,
I would say, "Sleep well today!
All the nations on earth this sacred hour
Deep honor to you will pay.

We know not who you are or how
You went to meet death's hour;
But we know you did not pale or falter,
We know you did not cower.

Here in your solitary grandeur
You sleep this Memorial Day.
You will not hear the eulogies,
The words of praise we say.

But the deepest honor a man can have
Is yours eternally,
Not for conquest, but for principle,
To your death you crossed the sea.

Sleep well, O Unknown Soldier!
Nations kneel at your feet.
Under November's cold, dark skies,
May your slumber be long and sweet!"



NOVEMBER VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers assist with our Sunday morning worship services. Listed below are those who serve in November as a reminder and as a **“THANK YOU”** for serving.

Date	Communion Assistants	Greeters	Readers	Usher Captains	Counting Captains
Nov. 7	N/A	Volunteers Needed	Stephen Fischer	Steve Lamont	Kevin Tuer
Nov. 14	N/A	Volunteers Needed	Mary-Lou Drown	Jerry Terhaerd	Tim Gropp
Nov. 21	N/A	Volunteers Needed	Sister Jean Widmeyer	Tom Cosstick	Tim Gropp
Nov. 28	N/A	Volunteers Needed	Linda Faulhafer	Darrell Renecker	Tim Iredale

Volunteers are the
HEART
 of our church

Zion Lutheran Church



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October 30, 2021

Dear Fellow Members of Zion:

As I write this letter, some of the COVID-19 restrictions are starting to be lifted. Of course, it is everyone's hope that the lifting of some of these restrictions will not hinder our progress as far as the virus as we move forward with these changes. More information regarding the lifting of the restrictions will be announced to our members during the month of November. As we all know, the journey these past nineteen months has greatly impacted all our lives in many ways and the hope is that as we move forward at this time, the changes that we are forced to endure will have positive effects on our lives. At least this needs to be our prayer. Enduring difficult times is a time that hopefully forces us to relook at our lives and make changes for the better along with gaining a keener insight to what is really important as well as focusing our thoughts on the things for which we need to be most thankful. As your Treasurer, I will be one of the first that needs to follow my own advice as I oversee my role along with walking alongside each one of you. For me, I must admit that the past nineteen months have been very stressful. This time has created financial challenges for our Church much more than in the past. The financial changes that we instituted during this period helped us weather this time to the best of our ability. For your support of these changes as well as your financial support during these past nineteen months, we extend our sincere appreciation on behalf of the Congregational Council along with the Finance Committee.

As I look into the future, especially the next two months, I am required as your Treasurer to share with you the current financial status of our Church. As far as expenses, most of our expenses are in line with budgets that were approved at the Annual Congregational Meeting earlier this year. As far as our income, we need to be most grateful to the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy program that continued to offset some of our salary expenses with these Grant funds totalling \$18,650.00.

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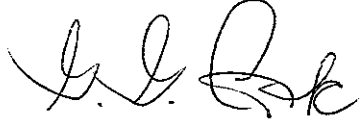
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However, this program is coming to an end shortly. In addition, our rental income for both our building and our parking lot across the street from the Church increased dramatically over this income in the past. As I write this letter, the combined rental income this year is \$15,450.00 versus \$4,450.00 last year, an increase of \$11,000.00. The increase in the building rental is due in a large part to our rental agreement with Avon Mennonite Church. This arrangement is working well and an excellent opportunity for us to share our building with our brothers and sisters at Avon Mennonite Church. But even with this combined income, Zion's Current Fund has a deficit balance of \$45,779.12 as of September 30th. Therefore, having shared this information with you, each member is being asked to assist in whatever way you are able to help eliminate this shortfall over the next two months.

We ask that you prayerfully consider our request of helping to eliminate the shortfall by year end and responding as you are able. A special envelope marked "Current Fund Deficit" is enclosed for your use in making an offering to decrease Zion's deficit.

Thank you for your continuing faithfulness to the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ here at Zion Lutheran Church.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. L. Cook". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "G" and "L".

Gerald Cook, Treasurer
on behalf of the Finance Committee & Congregational Council