

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

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PASTOR'S DEVOTIONAL

"And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was added to the eleven disciples." – Acts 1:26.



Unknown Saints

Every Sunday, my parents and I would take our place in the pews in St. Peter's Lutheran Church in North Plainfield, New Jersey. While I was mostly attentive to the service, I must admit that there were times when my attention wandered, and I would often find myself staring at the stained-glass windows that surrounded our sanctuary. The windows featured many persons and stories from the Bible; at the bottom of each

window was a dedication to the person for whom the window was donated. Some of the names were familiar, since many families had worshipped at St. Peter's for generations; but some names were completely unfamiliar to me. All I knew was that they were very special to their loved ones, and people who played an important role in the life and ministry of the congregation where I was baptized, confirmed, ordained, and taught about the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Many of the congregations that I have served as pastor (including Zion) have stained-glass windows in their sanctuaries, windows that are also dedicated to the memory of loved ones and saints who from their labours rest. While my attention during worship is focussed on leading the service and preaching, there are other times during the week when I walk around the sanctuary and look at the names on these windows. As was true in my home congregation, some of the names I recognize from families who are still in our congregation; but other names are unfamiliar to me. What I know about these "unknown saints" is that they played an important role in the ministry of the congregation where we gather for worship surrounded by their names, and that they are among the saints for whom we give thanks even if their names are unknown to us.

On May 14, the church gives thanks for the life of St. Matthias, an apostle of Jesus Christ who is only mentioned in one place in the New Testament. In the ten days between the Ascension of Jesus and the day of Pentecost, the disciples need to decide who will replace Judas Iscariot among the Twelve. The position vacated by Judas' death had to be filled because the apostolic number twelve is symbolic of the restored faithful Israel (which was made up of twelve tribes that were descended from the twelve sons of Jacob). By initiating and leading the community's restoration of the original number of the Twelve, Peter fulfills Jesus' command to "*strengthen your brothers*" (Luke 22:32). Judas' replacement had to meet one important criterion: to be a witness to Jesus' resurrection the candidate must have "*accompanied us the whole time the Lord Jesus came and went among us*" (Acts 1:21). The community proposes to candidates for this position: Joseph called Barsabbas and Matthias. They prayed to Jesus to "*show which one of these two you have chosen*" (1:24). Then they cast lots, a biblical method of seeking God's Will, "*and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles.*" (1:26). Matthias, who unlike Judas was a witness to the resurrection of Jesus Christ, "*represents a repentant Israel in whose life God's reign is present through the gift of the Holy Spirit.*" (Robert W. Wall).

Matthias is never again mentioned by name in the New Testament, but he was among the apostles who received the gift of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost "*and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.*" (Acts 2:4). Legends and traditions tell stories of his apostolic ministry, and he is remembered as a martyr who gave his life for his witness to the Gospel; but there is no evidence to back up any of these stories. But even if his name fades from the biblical witness, he is one of the countless disciples of Christ in every generation whose names have been forgotten but whose legacy lives on in the continuing life of the Church and our mission to be the "*one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church*" (Nicene Creed) that continues the work begun among the first apostles to "*proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*" (1 Peter 2:9). According to Clement of Alexandria, Matthias was chosen like all disciples of Jesus not because of who he already was, but for what Jesus foresaw he would become. Matthias was elected an apostle not because he was worthy, but because he would become worthy. Matthias was chosen by God who is "*the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, in order that, as it is written, 'Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.'*" (1 Corinthians 1:30).

Most of us will end up like many of people listed on the stained-glass windows in numerous churches, persons whose names are forgotten like Matthias' name is never again mentioned in the Bible. But while we may not remember their names, we give thanks for their faithfulness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in their generation, and for laying the foundation

upon which our church and its witness has been built. We may be listed one day with Matthias among the ‘unknown saints,’ but we continue to strive as he and so many Christians have been faithful to their callings to “*be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labour is not in vain.*” (1 Corinthians 15:58).

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Jeff Laustsen

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE APRIL 20, 2022 CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING



*Congregational
Council*

The April 20, 2022 Congregational Council Meeting was held in person in the Fellowship Hall and via Zoom Conference.

We have obtained further information regarding different options for live streaming of services. In order to be able to provide live streaming, volunteers are needed to operate the system. If you would be able to help with this project, please contact Pastor Jeff or any one of our Council members.

Plans are being made to hold an outside Sunday Service at Queen’s Park on Sunday, September 11, 2022 which could also be Rally Sunday for Sunday School re-opening.

The installation of the new phone system is taking longer than expected.

The Rental Agreement with Avon Mennonite Church has been completed and signed by all parties.

We continue to receive inquiries for rentals in the building and for portions of the gravel parking lot.

A Motion was made, seconded and carried electing Gerald Cook to Congregational Council. We now have 11 members on Congregational Council with one position remaining vacant.

Donations/offerings, 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.

ZION QUILTERS



Our quilting ladies have twelve (12) small quilts completed and ready for sale. If you would like to purchase a small quilt, either for yourself or for a loved one, please contact Irene Ehgoetz at 519-271-8878.

If you, or anyone you know, would like our talented quilting ladies to make a beautiful quilt for you or as a gift, please contact Irene Ehgoetz at 519-271-8878.

ALSO, if you have any material that you would like to donate to our quilters to use in one of their creations, please call Irene.

The ladies have been “busy bees” and are always looking for new projects!

Submitted by: Irene Ehgoetz

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS



Once again, we are reaching out to you as we are trying to organize classes and arrange for teachers in anticipation for when we are able to plan for the return of Sunday School, when safe to do so.

For this reason, we ask that all parents wishing to enroll your child(ren) in the Sunday School program, please fill out the attached survey. 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

Please click here for the survey: <https://forms.glc/bS3dCdiEaSrnrxLEA>

Once we have our students registered, we will be in a better position to arrange for teachers.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you for your assistance and co-operation!

Paula McNaughton, Sunday School Coordinator

INTRODUCING CHAIR YOGA

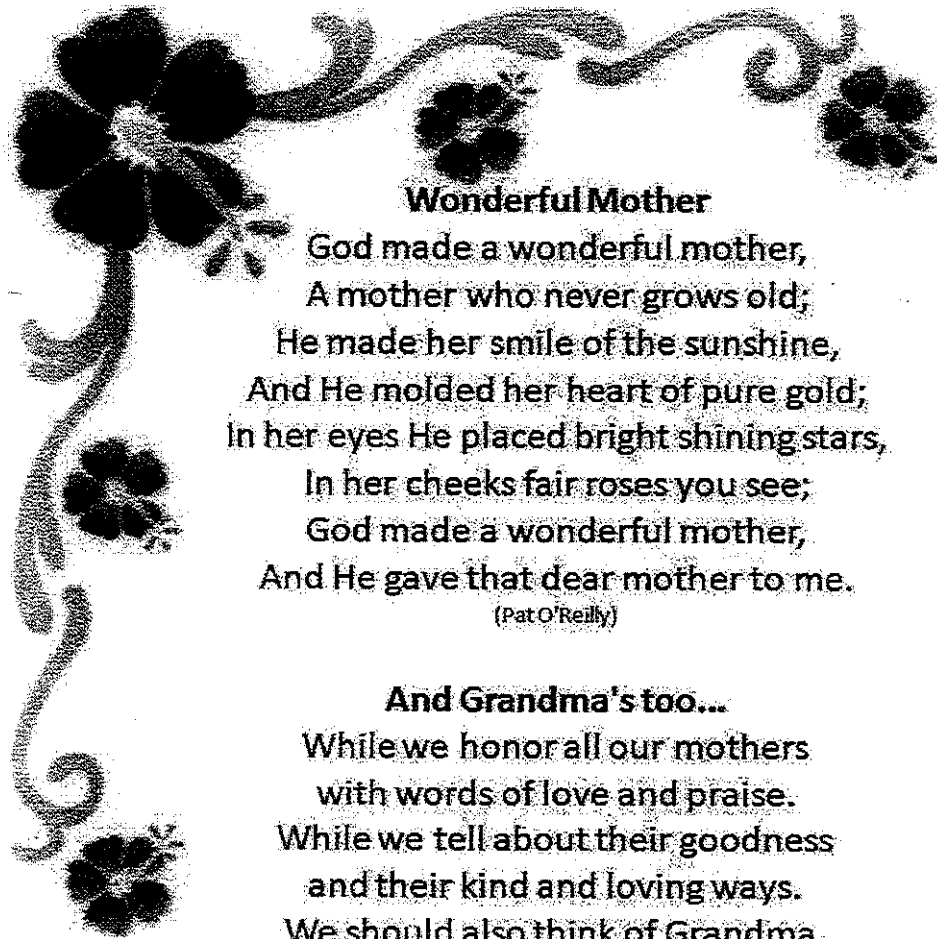


There's a Place for You!

“Chair Yoga” is happening at Zion and the participants are having fun with it. The benefits of “chair yoga” include: increased flexibility, improved strength, improved proprioception, reduce stress and pain, improve pain management skills and sleep better. So if you want to join in on the fun on

Tuesday mornings from 9:30 A.M. to 10:30 A.M. please call Jane in the office at 519-271-8527.

MOTHER'S DAY IS SUNDAY, MAY 8TH



Wonderful Mother

God made a wonderful mother,
A mother who never grows old;
He made her smile of the sunshine,
And He molded her heart of pure gold;
In her eyes He placed bright shining stars,
In her cheeks fair roses you see;
God made a wonderful mother,
And He gave that dear mother to me.

(Pat O'Reilly)

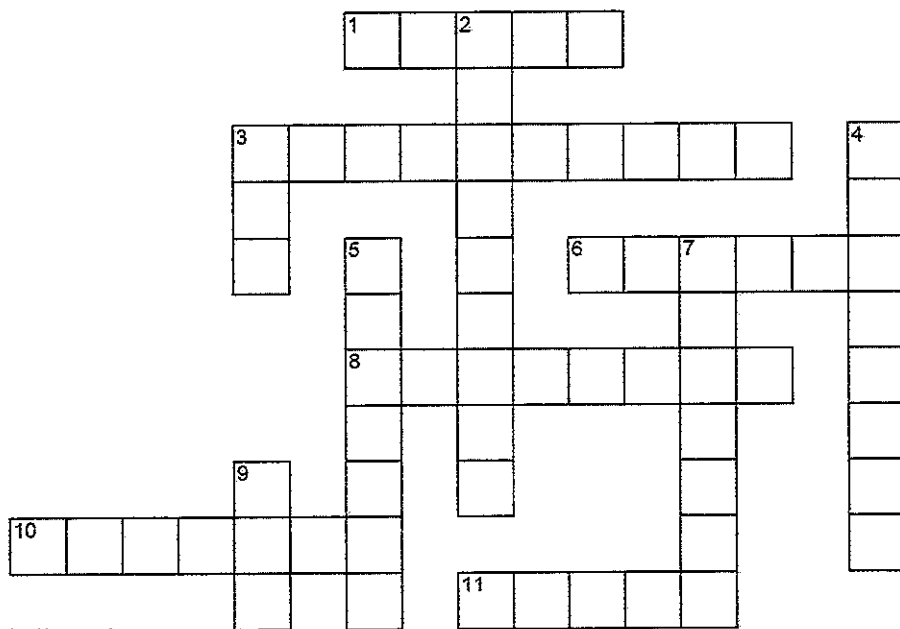
And Grandma's too...

While we honor all our mothers
with words of love and praise.
While we tell about their goodness
and their kind and loving ways.
We should also think of Grandma,
she's a mother too, you see....
For she mothered my dear mother
as my mother mothers me.

Author Unknown

Mother's Day

Matt 19:19 Honour thy father and thy mother...



www.churchhousepuzzles.com

ACROSS

- 1 Where did you get the information to honor your mother?
- 3 This is a special day to do things for your mother
- 6 If your mom drinks this you can make it for her
- 8 Tell your Mother this for the being the best mom in the world
- 10 Color one of these and give it to your mom
- 11 Tell this person thank you for the mom that you have been blessed with

DOWN

- 2 You should try making this for you mom
- 3 This is the name of the person who gave birth to you
- 4 Give your mom a break and do this for her so she can have the day off
- 5 What book of the Bible has the scripture about honoring your mother?
- 7 This is something you can pick and give to your mother for Mother's day.
- 9 This should be the first thing you do when you see your mom.

WORD BANK: Bible, breakfast, cleaning, coffee, flowers, hug, jesus, matthew, mom, mothersday, picture, thankyou.

PLEASE JOIN US IN A PRAYER FOR UKRAINE

As we thank God for our Mothers, Grandmothers and for all of our blessings; let us pray for the people of Ukraine who have suffered great loss and who live in fear for their lives and the lives of their loved ones. We pray that love will overcome fear, and that life will overcome death and destruction.

God of peace and justice,
we pray for the people of Ukraine today.

We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons.

We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow,
that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.

We pray for those with power over war or peace,
for wisdom, discernment and compassion to guide their decisions.

Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear,
that you would hold and protect them.

We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

Amen.



*Lord,
Hear Our
Prayer*



*From Pastor Jeff, Sister Jean
Jane & Sue
Paul, Laura & Sandra*