

FOURTH
SUNDAY IN



LENT

March 19, 2023

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

Stratford, Ontario

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People of Zion

Rev. Jeffrey Laustsen

Sister Jean Widmeyer

Paul Shilton

Laura Burton

Sandra Mogensen

Ministers

Pastor

Visitation Minister

Minister of Music

Organist

Pianist

Lent 4

March 19, 2023

GATHERING

Prelude

Welcome, Announcements

Confession and Forgiveness

Hymn 673: "God, Whose Almighty Word"

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Greeting

Prayer of the Day:

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Bend your ear to our prayers, Lord Christ, and come among us.

**By your gracious life and death for us, bring light into the
darkness of our hearts, and anoint us with your Spirit, for you
live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now
and forever.**

Amen.

WORD

First Reading: 1 Samuel 16:1-13

Psalm: 23

Second Reading: Ephesians 5:8-14

Gospel: John 9:1-41

Children's Message

Sermon:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/R4QYAERDEdM?feature=share>

Hymn 779: “Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound”

Installation of Congregational Council

Prayers of Intercession

Sharing the Peace

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Choir Anthem: “A Jubilant Song”

Mary Lynn Lightfoot

MEAL

Offertory Prayer

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The Great Thanksgiving

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Communion Prayer

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The Lord’s Prayer

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Distribution of Holy Communion

Communion Hymns: 480, 487

Post-Communion Blessing

Post-Communion Prayer

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SENDING

Blessing

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Hymn 793: “Be Thou My Vision”

Dismissal

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Postlude

Zion Lutheran Church welcomes our visitors and guests. We are pleased that you have come to join us in the worship of our God of grace and love. May you be strengthened and uplifted in our time together. Plan to be with us, again, at your earliest opportunity.

All people of faith and those who seek faith are welcome to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion. This morning, we will be distributing the Lord’s Supper in a continuous fashion. Trays holding individual cups of wine are on stands at either side of Pastor Jeff for those wishing to receive wine. The ushers will invite the congregation to come forward down the center aisle.

Please note that masks are “no longer mandatory”; but, continuing to wear a mask is strongly recommended. Our ropes for “limited” capacity have come down; but, we do encourage “social distancing” wherever possible. “Pre-registration” for worship is no longer required.

SUNDAY SCHOOL: A reminder that Sunday School will end at 11:15 A.M. We ask that parents/guardians wait until that time before coming for your children.

<p style="text-align: center;">STRATFORD CONCERT CHOIR</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Presents</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“DURUFLÉ REQUIEM”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Saturday, March 25, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. Avondale United Church</p> <p style="text-align: center;">\$40 tickets are available online at StratfordConcertChoir.org or at Blowes Stationery</p>
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WOMEN OF FAITH MEETING: Please be advised the next general meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, March 29, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall.**

BIBLE STUDY: If any one is wanting to explore God’s Word and what it means for us in our daily lives as Christians, bring your lunch and come out and join us on Thursdays at noon in the Parlour. For further information, please speak with Pastor Jeff.

HOUSE OF BLESSING: To help the House of Blessing with their significant increase in the number of people using their services since this time last year, as you are able, if you could bring hygiene items or rice for the House of Blessing Food Bank and place it in the basket at the entrance of the church. Thank you for sharing your blessings with those in need.



EASTER FLOWERS: As is our custom here at Zion, donations are now being accepted so the **Women of Faith** 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, in the locked mailbox, or bring it in to the church office any weekday morning.

Thank you!

SALT 3 News Update – March 2023

Stratford Anglican-Lutheran Team has been working to bring the Al Taeh family to Canada since 2018, and they finally arrived safely on the snowy night of January 27, 2023. Privacy and confidentiality are top of mind during their early weeks in their new home, so you haven't heard very much from us about how they are doing – until now.

As you probably know, they already had family here in Stratford, the Alta'eh family we sponsored in 2016. (That's not a spelling error or a different name. It's just how different staff at UN High Commission for Refugees transliterated the family name from Arabic to Roman letters!) It has been wonderful to see the adults reuniting after seven years, and a joy to watch five Alta'eh and six Al Taeh kids getting to know one another! This has made a huge difference in helping the family feel more at home in a strange country and navigate a new community. It's been a great help with translation!

We were blessed to find an excellent rental house for the family very close to a public school and many other amenities. They appreciated all the set-up we did before they arrived, and now are making it their own. Many thanks to all of you who so generously donated furniture, kitchenware, and many other household goods! Thanks also to the St. Paul's Thrift Shop and others who donated clothing!

The family has their OHIP numbers, Healthy Smiles Ontario assessments and dental coverage numbers for the children, a family doctor, a dentist, an optometrist, and their first COVID-19 vaccinations!! Dental treatment appointments are under way. Car seat safety training has also been completed for the parents and drivers. Alia Alta'eh has been indispensable in transporting and interpreting at appointments.

The adults have bank accounts that are working fine for them. They are learning to use debit and credit cards and online bill-paying and rental payments with our Canadian financial systems.

Shopping is going well – Alia is a great shopping guide for them. They are always looking for Lebanese-style pita bread for a good price!

Five of the children have started school, and all is going well. The youngest, who is just a year-and-a-half, is tentatively enrolled in day care for next fall. Mom and Dad are working hard in their English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. There may be opportunities for volunteers to visit regularly to help

with reading, schoolwork, ESL, etc. Contact Chris Thrasher (chrisandrobthrasher@gmail.com)

Dad now has his G1 driver's licence. Volunteers who could take them for driving practice would be welcome – contact Dave Van Schaik (vanschaikdavid1@gmail.com) or Tom Patterson (tompatterson220@gmail.com).

The children are looking forward to playing soccer this summer. Robin Rutherford is looking for a tricycle, a bicycle or two (the oldest is 10) and one or two scooters for them. She also is gathering outdoor play items (small pool to use as a sandbox, badminton racquets, skipping ropes, kites, wagon, hockey nets for backyard soccer, trampoline). Contact Robin at robinrutherford2@icloud.com if you can help with those items.

The Al Taeh family – adults and children – are a delight to know. It is a gift and privilege to be able to help them find a better, safer, healthier life in Canada. They are no longer refugees – they are Permanent Residents with a home in this country.

None of this could be happening without the wonderful support of the people in our four churches and our friends in the community who have volunteered, donated generously, encouraged and prayed. It's a bit too soon to overwhelm them with new people in their lives, but we hope to have a gathering in the spring or summer where you will have a chance to meet these strangers whom you have welcomed.

Your SALT 3 Committee

Zion's Representatives are:

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