

ZIONNEWS

MAY 2012

A publication for the family of Zion Lutheran Church
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PASTOR'S DEVOTIONAL "THANKS FOR ALL YOU DO"

I suspect most every museum, school, and church in the world has a place where they store their lost and found items. I have rifled enough times through Zion's own place where we store lost and found items to know that the "lost-and-found" name is a complete misnomer. Nothing presently in that box has yet to be "found" certainly not by its true owner and nothing in that box may ever be found or claimed. Every item sits patiently and quietly, week after week, hopelessly separated from its rightful owner. Of course, most of the items are articles of clothing that have been lost or left behind! Gloves, jackets, sweaters, that sort of thing. Sometimes glasses, umbrellas, earrings, sunglasses. Hard to believe, but one colleague told me someone had lost their dentures in his church. I think he was pulling my leg.

I read online that the Edmonton Public Library's stash of lost items grew so large that one of the librarians there took it upon herself to begin logging all of the objects found sandwiched in the pages of returned books. Her inventory was fascinating. Everything from a slice of cooked bacon to a flattened silver turtle made the list. She has found two magnetic hotel door keys, one pair of 3-D glasses, one chicken bone, one French fry, one gummy worm, one St. James Place mortgage card from a Monopoly game, and one cigarette. There was even a colour photograph of Ex-Lax products.

This librarian's greatest find, however, was a 3x5 inch card with five words printed in pencil on it: "Thanks for all you do." Now that is a treasure. Maybe it was just a book mark, accidentally left behind. But equally possible, maybe it wasn't. Perhaps that little card was one library user's gentle appreciation for the poor soul who has to peel a dried French fry off the page of a tender novel, or scrape a flattened turtle from inside a dictionary. Who's to say? I can think of plenty of people doing other thankless work who would love to stumble upon a similar sign of grace, just as modest. The restaurant custodian who picks cigarette butts out of the urinal is one. The utility linesman working the night shift to restore power through the latest ice storm is another.



Thanks for all you do. Words on a lost index card that meet the eyes of a finder – a message of grace in a sometimes grace-less world – precious meaning received in the midst of monotonous routine. How wonderful to feel noticed when we're down on life or lost in a maze of mundane tasks. Hearing a gracious word from another is almost like being found – being rescued. When we get off track and lose sight of meaningful things and important relationships, to be retrieved is the most wonderful feeling in the world. The blessing of having someone find or notice us refuels our hope. We start to regain our bearings.

I think of the Corinthian Christians trying to form a congregation in the midst of a world culture. Excessive eating and drinking and sexual promiscuity were the norm in Corinth. Imagine how encouraging it must have felt to receive a hand written note from the Apostle Paul far away, especially when the opening line read: "I always thank God for all of you."

The important thing we want to keep in mind is this. Whenever we get lost in some inglorious duties of a given day or find ourselves bereft of meaning because of mindless tasks or unbelievable challenges, we have a Lord who keeps watch. This Lord tends to us in moments when we may feel forsaken, like unclaimed items in a lost-and-found box. Faith tells us that God does not wait for someone else to reclaim us and get us back on our feet. God initiates the reclamation project and pursues us. Every so often we notice this strong behaviour of God, and we say: "Thanks for all you do." Oh, how those five words must gladden the heart of God!

Peace and Joy be with you,

Rev. Douglas Reble
Pastor, Zion Lutheran Church



*And blessed is the fruit
of your womb*

VICAR'S DEVOTIONAL "BIRTHING THE IMAGE OF GOD"

As I glance at my May calendar, I can't help but think of all those who are mothers. May 4 is the day set aside to remember Monica, the mother of Augustine, and May 21st for Helena, mother of Constantine. May 13th is of course Mother's day, and on May 7th is my own mother's birthday. (Happy Birthday Mom!)

The last day of May is a festival in the church when we commemorate the visit of Mary (Christianity's most beloved mother) to Elizabeth (the mother of John the Baptist). It is

when Mary visits Elizabeth that we get the magnificat, Mary's most beautiful song of praise. The opening words of Mary's song, in Luke's Gospel, come just before Jesus of Nazareth is born into the world.

Mary sings, "My soul magnifies the Lord". (Luke 1:46a)

This song is part of the proclamation that God is coming to live among us in a human nature. The original Greek meaning for the word soul refers to "the breath of life, the very essence of life"; it is the vital force which animates the body. Without the soul, the body is just an inanimate object; a graven image not to be worshiped or glorified. Luke refers to the soul as magnifying the Lord. To magnify is defined as "to make great, to make conspicuous." Examined carefully, these words disclose that it is Mary's very essence which reveals God's greatness.

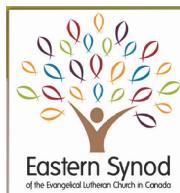
These words could also have come from any human to describe how we were created in the image of God. As crafted in *imago deo*, God created us to care for creation.

Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." (Gen 1:26-28)

When we care for creation, we are imaging God. Jesus Christ lived his life speaking out against injustice, caring for the marginalized, living his life completely for others. Through Jesus' words and actions, we can see God.

May all of you in this month of May, celebrate motherhood, celebrate birth, celebrate creation by imaging God. Acting out of love, hospitality, and compassion.

Shalom,
Vicar Steve



ELCIC PRAISE APPEAL OFFERING

Enclosed with this newsletter is a letter from Bishop Michael Pryse of our Eastern Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada as well as an offering envelope designated "ELCIC Praise Appeal Offering." Our national

church is in need and we are asked to respond to that need. Please read Bishop Pryse's letter and prayerfully consider how you might give out of your blessings. We are going to receive the offering on Pentecost Sunday, May 27. Of course, if you can't be there that day, then share any Sunday during the month of May. Thank you for all you do.



HOONOURING OUR VICARS

As you know it is our custom to honour those individuals who have served us, as vicars, with a gift to mark their receiving their first call. The tradition continues on Sunday, May 13 as we honour Bruce Thompson who served us so well, at Zion, in 2010-2011. He recently accepted the call to Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Brockville. Bruce and his wife Charlotte plan to be with us at both services, on May 13, so pick the service time that fits. Come and wish them God's blessings.

P.S. Of course, everyone is wondering about our own Steve Hoffard and news of his receiving his first call. We can't say anything yet but things are in process for Steve. Please keep him, Sylvia and Braden in your prayers in this time of discernment and transition.



WE NEED YOUR INPUT

The Church Council, Worship and Music Committee, and Finance Committee have been discussing the implication of moving to one service, beginning at 10 AM, all year round and not just in the summer months. The reality is our numbers on Sunday morning no longer reflect the need for two services. There would be many pluses to having one service only: fuller church, choir at most every service, more ready supply of volunteers to fill the needed tasks, no early morning hassles getting the kids ready for Sunday School. But what are the minuses?

To that end, we would like to hear from you. Listed below are our Church Council members, at Zion. Feel free to contact them and share your opinions with them. At this point we are simply gathering comments from Zion members. No decision has been reached. If it is decided to go to one service only, it would only be for a trial period until a congregational decision is made to make a permanent change or not.

Zion Church Council members: Cathy McCord (Chairperson), Rob Leifso (Vice-Chairperson), Liz Bomasuit (Secretary), Steve Arand, Bill Hoffard, Audrey Miller, Bruce Sippel, Sherry Malcho, Wendy Holman, Brian Stever, Rob Illman, Joanne Wallace.

CONFIRMATION DAY



This year, the people of Zion Church will be privileged to have seven young people affirm their faith in God, Jesus, and the Church through the Rite of Confirmation. It all takes place on the Fifth Sunday of Easter, May 6, at 11 AM. Our confirmands this year are: Jordyn Eckhardt, Stanford (Teddy) Gough, Madison Hendricks, Lindsay McKay, Valerie Robinson, Gloria Walch, Paige Zimmer. We thank God for these young people. May they be enlightened with the gifts of the Spirit and nourished in the community of faith.



MARCO BURAK CONCERT

On Saturday, May 12, at 7:30 PM, at Zion, our own organist/pianist, Marco Burak joined by Michel Allard, Michael Dobinson, and Michelle Wells present new compositions, both acoustic and electronic, reflecting various responses to remembrance of and effects of the War of 1812. For this concert, MMMM is joined by guest composer Martha Hill-Duncan and performers Paul Allard, our own Lynne Hopcraft and Doug Peterman. Admission is by donation. Net proceeds go to the Friendship Meal ministry program of Zion Church. Spread the word! A most enjoyable evening it will be.



WOMEN OF FAITH NEWS

The Zion Women of Faith were busy in April with spring cleaning. The kitchen, church parlour, and pews were cleaned. Thank you to all the ladies (and some men) that volunteered to clean these areas. It was greatly appreciated.

The Mary Martha Circle of WOF meet on Wednesday evening, May 23. They are planning to go out for dinner at Let Them Eat Cake at 6 PM. This is also bring your friends night. Please contact Mary-Lou Drown (519-273-2268), Jan Bennewitz (519-271-6073) or Judy Hammond (519-272-1540) if you plan to attend.

The Gleaners Circle of WOF meet on Tuesday, May 8 at 2 PM. Millie Rhem, Mildred Knackstedt, and Ruth Lindner are in charge of the meeting.

Wednesday, June 13 is our annual gathering in Grand Bend. We meet at Joanne and Wayne Young's cottage for a meal and then off to the Huron County Playhouse to see "Wizard Of Oz." Tickets are \$35. Please contact Joanne (519-271-3225) if you plan to attend.

SUNDAY SCHOOL SNIPITS



The Sunday School year is winding down at Zion. A huge thank you goes out for the dedication of our teachers, and helpers this year. Your efforts have made our Sunday School an exciting place to be. Our end of the year celebration will be on Pentecost Sunday, May 27 with a special guest in attendance. Wednesday evening, May 30 is our staff appreciation BBQ.

Jan and Mary-Lou, Zion's education team

CALLING ALL SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS

What a great opportunity to get acquainted with the children of our congregation and to reunite yourself with the bible stories of your youth. The Sunday School session runs from September to May with numerous breaks throughout this time dedicated to holidays or events. This valuable commitment is meant to be shared as it is our goal to obtain two teachers per grade. Teachers can either teach together throughout the entire session or split the session in half with one individual taking the first half and the next individual taking the second half. Valuable helpers are also provided to assist with class preparation and any assistance needed during class. All materials are provided to guide teachers with their classes. Support and ideas are always available if needed. We are a team with a similar goal of affording our children's spiritual learning in a fun and informative way that is both enlightening and beneficial.



If you are interested, please contact Mitzi Podann by email at mitzianddoug@sympatico.ca or if you do not have access to email please call 519-662-4856 or Tina Small at 519-273-3860.



FRIENDSHIP MEAL

Our Friendship Meal for people in need in our community takes place on Friday, May 25 at 5 PM. It is good to contribute to the life of Stratford's community in this way. You are welcome to help us prepare at 1 PM or serve or clean up from 4:30 PM and on. For more information, feel free to talk to Ingrid Fraser (519-271-4382) or Pastor Robert Hutchison (519-271-5808).



ZION TABLE FOR SENIORS

Our May gathering of Zion Table For Seniors, our ministry which promotes fun, food, and friendship, takes place on Tuesday, May 22 at 12 noon. Please let Doris Bartlett (519-271-9622) or Phyllis Jeffery (519-271-3668) know by Tuesday, May 15 if you can attend. Lunch cost is only \$10.

Our after dinner entertainment is The Half-Tones featuring our own Rudy Dieghton and friends. Light jazz and easy listening music is their forte. Come and enjoy!

THANK YOUS ARE IN ORDER

A special word of thanks to all those who contributed to our Easter celebration by donating towards the purchase of Easter and spring flowers for the church. They are: **Paul & Ruth Illmann, Noreen Wilker, Brian & Barb Gropp, Richard & Jean Winter, Brian & Pauline Schade, Tim & Darlene Gropp, Bob & Heather Wickenheiser, Margaret Golder, Judith Hammond, Olive Siemon, Ralph & Vi Cook, Elizabeth Wachsmann, Barry & Nancy Schmidt, Joyce & Verne Hammer, Elsie Dahm, Elfrieda Zimmermann, Don & Eva Wagner, Rudy & Bea Deighton, Bob & Bev Keutsch, Wayne & Joanne Young, Wayne & Linda Faulhafer, Jean Weir, Doreen Graul, Stuart & Millie Rhem.**



Weddings

Andre Lallemand & Katherine Steigmeier on May 5



In Memoriam

Hazel Feick, March 21
Allan McGregor, March 14



Coleton Christopher Schmidt, son of Christopher & Shelley on April 15
Abigail Grace Anne Boersen, daughter of Joshua & Erin on April 22
Emma Isabelle Ehgoetz, daughter of Ryan & Christy on April 29

MAY 2012 VOLUNTEERS

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

Date	Communion Assistants	Greeters	Readers	Usher Captains	Counting Captains
May 6	9 N/A 11 Vicar Bruce Thompson & Steve Hoffard	9 Bruce Mitchell & Ellen Wolfe 11 Jerry & Marion Ney	9 Marg Lamont 11 N/A	9 Ed Illman 11 Mike Bomasuit	N/A
May 13	N/A	9 Darrell & Judy Renecker 11 Percy & Edith Schneider	9 Mindy Gough 11 Fritz Steigmeier	9 Ed Illman 11 Mike Bomasuit	Steve Arand
May 20	9 Linda Weitzel 11 Verne Hammer	9 Sharon Reble 11 Klaus & Linda Spriner	9 Dianne Hiller 11 Linda Springer	9 Wayne Hinz 11 Fritz Steigmeier	Brian Stever
May 27	N/A	9 Jim & Kathy Schellenberger 11 Sharyn Cheney	9 Heather Bonn 11 Curtis Weidner	9 Wayne Hinz 11 Fritz Steigmeier	Brian Stever

ZION CHURCH FINANCIAL REPORT

	Current	Benevolence
Monthly Requirements	\$28,000.00	\$4,600.00
March Income	\$22,060.67	\$3,211.75
March Expenses	\$27,391.36	\$3,211.75

CURRENT FUND DEFICIT (as of March 31, 2012) \$14,026.88



Finance Update

EXPANDING YOURSELF: A STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT
In one way, none of us want to expand. That's why we diet and exercise so much. But in other ways we want to stretch to the limit of our potential to reach out, to learn, to positively touch other lives. Each week and every time we worship, we have this chance to expand ourselves. It is our offering. Through our gifts we reach out to people in our congregation, in our community, in our country, and around the world,

bringing the gospel and serving human need.

P.S. Are you on POP? POP stands for pre-authorized offering program sometimes known as PAR for pre-authorized remittances. You probably use PAR when you pay your cable bill, natural gas bill, hydro bill, taxes, mortgage, perhaps your car payments and insurance premiums. Most of us use PAR because it is convenient and it ensures that important obligations get paid on time, without fail. Is your church an important obligation in your life? If so, POP may be for you. Also a good idea if you are travelling over the holiday months and away from church. Contact Terry Faulhafer at the church office at 519-271-8527 or zionlc@golden.net and she can explain how easy and confidential it is.

P.P.S. Presently we have over 61 POP givers at Zion. Think about joining them!



ZION CHURCH BULLETIN BOARD

For your interest and, where appropriate, your response, we are happy to share the following with you. Please note:

1. **Seminary Golf Tournament:** Everyone is invited to the "Friends of the Seminary" Golf Tournament which will be held Thursday, May 24 at the Ariss Valley Golf and Country Club. The entry fee includes: golf cart, 18 holes of golf, box lunch, buffet steak dinner, charitable donation receipt. For more information or to register, please call Dorinda Kruger Allen at 519-884-0710, ext. 3241 or dkrugerallen@wlu.ca
2. **Camp Edgewood News:** Camp Edgewood, our Lutheran camp located in Eden Mills, just east of Guelph is hosting a spring tea on Sunday, May 13 and a Men's Weekend from May 25-27. To register or learn more call 1-519-856-9622 or contact heather@edgewood-camp.on.ca
3. **Stratford Concert Choir:** The Stratford Concert Choir completes their 30th Anniversary Season with a concert titled "A Spring Serenade." It will be held on Sunday, May 13 at 2 PM, at Central United Church. Advance tickets of \$20 are available from Blowes Stationary, Anything Grows, or Stratford Tourism Alliance.
4. **Community Living Fundraiser:** Community Living holds its 9th Annual "Swing Into Spring" on Thursday, May 24 at Knox Presbyterian Church from 6 PM to 10 PM. For \$30 entrance there is a buffet dinner, entertainment, a live and silent auction.
5. **Book and Bake Sale:** Parkview United Church, 470 Ontario St., Stratford is holding a book and bake sale on Friday evening, May 11 and Saturday morning, May 12. All are welcome!

CALL TO SPIRITUAL RENEWAL

Over the past couple of years, National Bishop Susan Johnson, has been encouraging a call for spiritual renewal and deeper discipleship within our church, which includes regular attendance at worship, daily prayer and scripture reading, involvement in a program of study, regular service in the community (not just the congregation), regular and proportional giving similar to the understanding of the tithe found in scripture, and commitment to sharing the good news with those around us, beginning with our family and friends. A simplified list of this call to deeper discipleship includes: Worship, Pray, Study, Serve, Give, Read, and Tell.

STUDY

We are called to continue to grow in faith and understanding. As we grow in life, we encounter new challenges and new questions. A deeper faith understanding can assist us in this growth. Scripture is one place to start our study discipline but it doesn't matter what you study or how you study as much as why you study. We hope the following ideas will help you to deepen your understanding of your faith and strengthen your relations with God.

- Participate in a regular Bible study.
- Participate in a weekend retreat or study program.
- Sign up for a course at seminary (seminary.wlu.ca and usask.ca/stu/luther) or at one of our schools. (lcbi.sk.ca and luthercollege.edu)
- Engage the stories, culture & community – and many blogs – at Living Lutheran (livinglutheran.com)
- Go to the Bible study at camp. (elcic.ca/Directories/Camps-And-Outdoor-Ministry.cfm)
- Search for courses on the Faith and Wisdom website. (faithandwisdom.org)
- Check out theological courses on The Fisher's Net. (fishersnet.net)
- Use The Lutheran World Federation study Give Us Today Our Daily Bread (lwf-assembly.org/explore/assembly-theme-resources).
- Investigate an issue that arises from your service work.
- Consider adding a reference or history book to accompany your Bible reading.
- Use a DVD based course from The Teaching Company to study scripture, history, archaeology, philosophy, religion as it relates to faith.
- Stretch yourself outside your comfort zone. (thehardestquestion.org)
- Make a weekly visit to the ELCIC's national website. (elcic.ca)
- Attend Luther Hostel in June. (wlu.ca/page.php?grp_id=12516&p=18314)
- Form a theological book group and read and discuss current or classic books on God, faith, the Church, spirituality and spiritual practices.
- Join or organize interfaith discussions or presentations or read books on other faiths
- Read The Small Catechism by Martin Luther, Evangelical Lutheran Worship, pages 1160-1167, Scripture and Worship, pages 1154-1159
- Download podcasts. Some to consider include: CBC's Tapestry and Ideas. (cbc.ca/podcasting)
- Take a Bible or The Bible as Literature course at one of our seminaries or schools.