

ZIONEWS

OCTOBER 2011



A publication for the family of Zion Lutheran Church

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PASTOR'S DEVOTIONAL

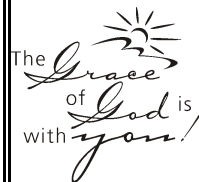
"THE REACH OF GRACE"

Students of Shakespeare know that the bard didn't create his material solely out of his own imagination, but instead masterfully recrafted stories that were centuries old. And Shakespeare's own dramas have been repeatedly reimagined in contemporary settings.

Recently I was listening to two authors being interviewed on CBC Radio One. Their names escape me, they were new to me. The CBC book reviewer asked the authors why so many novelists keep returning to Shakespeare's old stories for plots, and the two authors agreed that it's because the stories are so good. I agree. Shakespeare is particularly adaptable because the conflicts he chronicles – between vengeance and justice, and vengeance and forgiveness – are the oldest moral dilemmas that human beings face.

I was reminded of the power of old stories in another way, over the summer, when we read as our Old Testament readings the Shakespearean tragedy/comedy morality tale found in the Book of Genesis. The lectionary directs the church to the saga of Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob, Esau, Rachel and Leah once every three years, when at least half of us are fishing, at the beach or cottage, camping, wherever. Too bad really. Here is a story of betrayal, revenge, forgiveness and reconciliation. There is romance, deception, theft and, if you read between the lines, eros. And not unlike a Shakespeare play, all this happens in one family.

Every time I read a portion of the Jacob-Esau saga, I end up reading the whole drama. Esau is so good, straightforward and innocent. Isaac so vulnerable, trusting, and human. Jacob so opportunistic, devious, and dreadful. Rebekah so committed to the success of her favourite son, Jacob, and so efficient in her choreography of one of history's greatest scams.



And in and through it all, God uses Jacob for God's ultimately good purposes. You simply cannot read this story without being stunned by the mysterious reach of grace. If God can use Jacob, then there is hope for all of us.

The story turns finally on the outsider's graciousness which knows no

bounds. When Esau and Jacob meet at last, Esau does not kill his brother as he vowed, but runs to meet him, reminding the reader of that aggrieved father in the New Testament who runs down the road to welcome a wayward child home. Esau, not Jacob, represents the radical notion at the heart of Judaism and Christianity that the justice God requires is not revenge but forgiveness. The story ends as good stories do, with some uncertainty. It is quite possible that Jacob is still misrepresenting the truth, still scheming to save his skin. You can't find a more accurate description of the human condition than that.

God's response? To continue loving, forgiving, and claiming us as God's own no matter how human we are. For that, we should be exceedingly grateful.

Peace be with you,

Rev. Douglas Reble
Pastor, Zion Lutheran Church

VICAR'S DEVOTIONAL

"TIME WELL SPENT"

Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly more than all we can ask or imagine...Ephesians 2:4

By the time you read this we will all be well into our busy fall routines, and if you are anything like me, you might be wondering how you will ever get everything done that you need to do.

One of the things we have been encouraged to participate in by our national church is "**The Call To Spiritual Renewal**." More information on the call to spiritual renewal can be found on the internet at www.elcic.ca/csr/resources.cfm or by speaking to Pastor Doug or myself, but a simplified list of this call to deeper discipleship is this: **Pray, Read, Worship, Study, Serve, Give and Tell.**

God is calling us into a deeper relationship, but Bishop Susan Johnson cautions us to start slowly, "Remember, don't overdo it! It is just like starting a physical exercise program. Start with one or two new practices and make them a habit before you start trying anything else.



A spiritual discipline I attempt to maintain is to spend 45 to 60 minutes with God in devotional time each morning as preparation for the day. Did you notice I used the word “attempt?” More often, than I like to admit, that time is shortened or missed all together. Some mornings I choose to indulge in hitting the snooze button just one too many times. Often I delay this discipline with a promise to do it later in the day, and then fail to fulfill that promise.

I shared this information with a spiritual mentor of mine and he encouraged me to make a list of the benefits I get when I do make time for daily devotion. The top 4 on my list were as follows:

- 1. An improved ability to focus**
- 2. Less stress and lower blood pressure**
- 3. A deeper relationship with God**
- 4. A better aptitude for sermon writing**

I was able to see that the time spent in devotion was not time out of my day but actually added time to my busy day by increasing my efficiency. Martin Luther was on to something when he said, “If I fail to spend two hours in prayer each morning, the devil gets the victory through the day. I have so much business I cannot get on without spending three hours daily in prayer.”

I pray that you will join with me and our national church in the call to spiritual renewal, deepening our relationship with God. I anticipate that we will find it is time well spend.

God’s Peace,
Vicar Steve

THANKSGIVING AT ZION



Thanksgiving Sunday is October 9 and, as is custom, it will be a wonderful worship celebration as we gather in gratitude around Word and Sacrament. What better way to mark Thanksgiving than by turning our hearts to God with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

As in other years, we would like to enhance our celebration by asking for donations to help in the church decorations which are traditional at Thanksgiving. Can you help? We are looking for home canning, apples, gourds, squash, pumpkins, potted fall flowers, hay bales, corn and corn stalks, table cloths, wooden baskets, or anything you think may be appropriate. Any gifts of food you may take home or share with our local food banks.

Please bring your decorations to the church by Friday morning, October 7 at the latest. You may leave them in the boardroom or bring them to the office. If you have any questions, please direct them to Mike Bomasuit (519-272-0254 or 519-271-8527). You may even offer to help him decorate. Thanks Mike for your help and thank you everyone for all your gifts.

P.S. Our special Thanksgiving offering envelope will support the Zion Current Fund for the work it does in our congregation, Canadian Lutheran World Relief for the work it does on our behalf around the world and a local charity. Your love offerings are much appreciated.

OPEN FORUM: SEXUALITY RESOLUTIONS

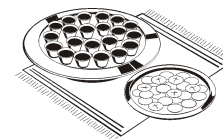
As you know, our Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, at the National Convention held in July in Saskatoon, passed a Social Statement On Human Sexuality and three resolutions which came out of that statement. Two of those resolutions, the one allowing pastor’s to preside at or bless legal marriages between same sex couples and the second resolution which states that sexual orientation is not in itself a factor which disqualifies a candidate for rostered ministry, have been received with both happiness and distress by individual members of our church family in all its expressions: congregation, synod, national. Of course, Pastor Doug all along has expressed that he is very supportive of the decisions that have been made.



To understand what these resolutions mean for our Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and our congregation, Pastor Doug and Vicar Steve are holding an open forum on Wednesday evening, October 26 at 7 PM. It will be a time not of decision making but of learning and conversation. All we ask is that you bring your Bible, an open mind and a heart of love.

By the way, what was the third resolution that was passed about? The motion is one that specifically affirms our continued unity in Christ. Even in the face of deep differences, we are encouraged to refrain from actions that will divide the body of Christ. Of course, we can disagree with each other about how to live out our faith. But our oneness and our salvation is in Christ!

FULL COMMUNION CELEBRATION



Members and friends of Zion Lutheran Church and the three Anglican parishes, in Stratford, (St. James, St. Paul’s, and St. Stephen’s), are coming together on Thursday, October 27, at 7:30 PM at Zion, to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of Full Communion between the Anglican

Church of Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. Special guests are Bishop Michael Pryse of our Eastern Synod and Bishop Terry Dance of the Huron Diocese which includes Stratford! A time of refreshment and fellowship will follow the service.

ISLAM: WHAT NON-MUSLIMS SHOULD KNOW

Join Vicar Steve for 6 weeks of coffee and conversation, in our church parlour, beginning Monday, October 17 from 7 PM to 8:30 PM. Together the group will explore Islam, the often-misunderstood faith of one billion people. All are welcome and feel free to invite a friend. There is a minimal cost of \$10 which includes the book "Islam" by John Koltner. Questions? Contact Vicar Steve at steve.hoffard@gmail.com or 519-276-8393.

THURSDAY NOON BIBLE STUDY RETURNS



Thursday noon Bible Study begins on October 6. Are you inquisitive? Are you a person of faith? Is it your desire to grow in faith? One source of nurture is God's Word that comes to us through the Scriptures. St. Paul says it well: "*So faith comes through what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ.*" (Romans 10:17). Together we seek this over lunch, coffee, tea, etc. presently we are hearing the prophet Jeremiah but we always have time to explore current issues and discover Christ's message.

You and your friends are most welcome.

Pastor Robert Hutchison

ZION MOVIE NIGHTS

Looking for a fun night out, plus a chance to get to know your church family? Join us for **Flicks & Fellowship Movie Nights** - new this fall!



Wednesday, October 12: ***The Blind Side (2009)*** Sandra Bullock won the best actress Oscar for her work in this powerful story about a homeless African-American youngster from a broken home who is taken in by a well-to-do white family. Based on the true story of Michael Oher, who eventually became an all-star American football player.

Wednesday, November 9: ***The Shawshank Redemption (1994)*** Tim Robbins and Morgan Freeman star in this moving drama about an unlikely friendship between two imprisoned

men who eventually find solace and redemption through acts of common decency.

Wednesday, January 12: ***Freedom Writers (2007)*** Hilary Swank stars as an idealistic young teacher parachuted into a California inner-city school crammed with embittered black, Latino and Asian high-school freshmen. Together, they teach one another tolerance, respect and hope.

Gather in the Church Parlour at 6:30 PM to chat and visit. **Movies start at 7 PM sharp.** All are welcome! Questions, comments, suggestions for movies you'd like to see next? Contact Joanne Wallace, Congregational Life Committee at 519-273-5097 or jwallace@wightman.ca

Flicks for families too!

Bring the young (and the young-at-heart) to a special Family Movie Night presentation of MGM's beloved classic, ***The Wizard of Oz*** on Friday, October 28, 7 PM in the Church Parlour. Questions? Contact Rob Illman, Congregational Life Committee 519-273-3924 or rillman@rogers.com

BENEFIT CONCERT AT ZION

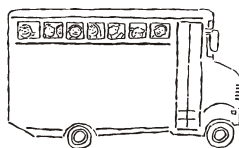


The Inshallah Choir of the Waterloo Lutheran Seminary community is coming to Zion Church on Reformation Sunday, October 30, at 7 PM, for a benefit concert in support of the work that Canadian Lutheran World Relief is doing for famine relief in Somalia and East Africa. Entitled "Seek Truth Make Peace," Inshallah sings songs of faith from around the world.

Join the 70 voice choir and director Debbie Lou Ludolph for an evening of song and praying with songs of faith. Experience the joy and yearning found in these songs and learn about the contexts from which they came. Inshallah is a ministry of the Kanita Centre for Worship and Global Song.

See you on the 30th! Spread the word. Invite a friend! And, again, it is for a good cause as we share our free-will offering.

ZION'S FALL ROAD TRIP



Join us for a day of food, fun, and fellowship, on Saturday, November 19 as we head off to Brampton for an afternoon performance of "The Last Resort," a madcap, off-the-wall murder mystery musical comedy at the Rose Theatre plus a fabulous buffet lunch at The Mandarin. The bus leaves the Zion parking lot at 9:30 AM, lunch at 11:30 AM, theatre at 2 PM, home by 6:30 PM.

The cost is \$99 per person which includes bus, lunch, performance ticket and all taxes. You must reserve your seat as soon as possible. Please book with Linda Weitzel at linda.weitzel@parkslivestock.com or 519-655-2815.

P.S. This event is brought to you by your Congregational Life Committee.

HAVE YOU SIGNED UP YET?

Have you signed up yet for the fall hike, planned by our Congregational Life Committee, to take place on Saturday, opportunity to celebrate God's year. We leave from the church one hour to Hilton Falls on the Reble (Pastor Doug's brother) three times. After a pleasant to Camp Edgewood, our on the way back by way of lunch. A sign up sheet is at the back of the church until Sunday, October 9. We will car pool, so please indicate, on the sign-up sheet, whether you are willing to drive. Questions? Speak with Pastor Doug.



SUNDAY SCHOOL SNIPITS



Our teachers for the fall term, in our Zion Sunday School are: 3 & 4 year olds: Hillary and Kiersten Steven; Senior Kindergarten: Janet Chandler; Grade 1 & 2: Mitzi Podann & Tina Small; Grade 3 & 4: Catherine Patterson; Grade 5 & 6: Sylvia Hoffard. Helpers are: Hannah Bush, Sarah Hartfiel, Lydia Mueller, Darren Robinson, Lindsay Ross. God bless these wonderful volunteers.

Special events for October are: Thanksgiving Craft Day and Martin Luther Day. Check the

Snipits each month for the upcoming special events.

Till next month....Jan and Mary-Lou

ZION TABLE FOR SENIORS



Our next gathering of Zion Table For Seniors, our ministry which promotes fun, food, and friendship, takes place on Tuesday, October 18 at 12 noon. Please let Doris Bartlett (519-271-9622) or Phyllis Jeffery (519-271-3668) know by Thursday, October 13 if you can attend. Lunch cost is only \$10.

Our after dinner guest is from the organization known as One Care, formerly Stratford Neighbourly Services and Meals on Wheels. The speaker will outline all the services that One Care provides which allows seniors to stay in their own homes as long as possible. Important information so plan to attend.

FRIENDSHIP MEAL NEWS



In August, Zion ministry volunteers served over 100 people at our Friendship Meal. It is a joy to serve the community of Stratford in this way and carry out our Lord's call to service. The October meal takes place on Friday, October 28. Those who wish to help prepare, usually gather around 1 PM and those who wish to serve and clean up, gather at 4:30 PM or just after. You are welcome to join in this ministry. New volunteers are needed and welcome. For more information, call Ingrid Fraser at 519-271-4382 or Pastor Robert Hutchison at 519-271-5808.

WOMEN OF FAITH NEWS

Our Women of Faith group, at Zion, will be full of activities during the month of October, activities to which all women of our congregation are welcome. Here's what's happening:



Sunday, October 16: The WOF lead our congregation in the Annual Praise Offering Service. Greeters, readers, and ushers are still needed. Speak with Mary-Lou Drown.

Saturday, October 22: "As We Journey" is the theme as WOF groups from

the London Conference gather at Trinity Lutheran Church, Tavistock at 9 AM. The cost is \$10 which includes lunch. Keynote speaker, in the morning, is our own Vicar Steve Hoffard. Call Mary-Lou Drown by October 15 if you wish to attend.

Tuesday, October 25: The Gleaner Circle of our WOF group meets at 2 PM for a poetry day, along with refreshments and good conversation.

Wednesday, October 26: The Mary Martha Circle of our WOF group meets at 7:30 PM for reflection, friendship, and faith building. Tell a friend! Bring a friend!

P.S. For more information about any of these events, please contact Mary-Lou Drown, at drown_ml@yahoo.ca or 519-273-2268



Gloria Kressler on September 11



Rylee Marie Neumeister, daughter of Dan & Julie on September 18.

HOMES FOR HOPE

MISSION POSSIBLE+ “Homes For Hope” is going to El Salvador three times over the next few months to bring hope in the form of housing as they build over 30 homes for people living in poverty. Joining them on the October 31 - November 11 trip is our own Walter Mueller (over 25 mission trips under his belt). Jennifer Fetter is planning to go on the March trip.

Join us on Sunday, October 23 as we commission and pray over many of the participants who will be sharing the faith in a tangible way. If you would like to make a donation for this worthwhile ministry (charitable tax deductible) please contact Walter at 519-273-3448. To love is to care is to act!

OCTOBER 2011 VOLUNTEERS

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

Date	Communion Assistants	Greeters	Readers	Usher Captain	Counting Captain
Oct. 2	N/A	9 Bob & Heather Wickenheiser 11 Rudy & Bea Deighton	9 Mike Bondi 11 Beryl Horst	9 Steve Lamont 11 Mike Bomasuit	David Frier
Oct. 9	9 Darlene Illman & Rob Leifso 11 Fritz Steigmeier & Nancy White	9 David & Sheila Wittig 11 Mervyn & Joyce Dietz	9 Heather Bonn 11 Susan Iredale	9 Ed Illman 11 Fritz Steigmeier	N/A
Oct. 16	N/A	9 & 11 Women of Faith	9 & 11 Women of Faith	9 Ed Illman 11 Fritz Steigmeier	Sherry Malcho
Oct. 23	N/A	9 Bruce Mitchell & Ellen Wolfe 11 David & Maria Doherty	9 Anne Cooper 11 Enid Lantz	9 Wayne Hinz 11 Don Wagner	Sherry Malcho
Oct. 30	9 Linda Weitzel & David Bennewitz 11 Wayne Young & Lorelee McNaughton	9 Wayne & Dianne Yundt 11 Brandyn Eckhardt	9 Stephen Fischer 11 Lorelee McNaughton	9 Wayne Hinz 11 Don Wagner	Steve Arand

ZION CHURCH FINANCIAL REPORT

	Current	Benevolence
Monthly Requirements	\$27,419.25	\$4,504.66
August Income	\$19,919.85	\$2,762.00
August Expenses	\$23,549.62	\$2,762.00

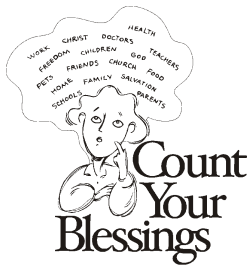
CURRENT FUND DEFICIT (as of August 31, 2011): \$31,428.40

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

This is a time of year when, barring a cataclysm, we do not expect the sort of weather that will make it impossible for us to get to the market. This means it's unlikely we'll panic if we drive by a grocery store and load a shopping cart with groceries we don't need. Since there's no threat, we can take a deep breath and consider the situation without panic.

However if there's a threat of snowfall in the forecast, however faint, you'll notice the parking lot of the grocery store fill up with cars, as folks empty the shelves and buy all the bread and milk. The less stuff they see, the more they grab.

Where does this panic come from? Once in a while a real disaster occurs and folks don't have access to food. You can understand anyone who has survived a disaster being a little jumpy. But most of us have never experienced real want, much less the breakdown of civilization. The worst that might happen is we'd have to make do for a day or two. Yet we panic.



In Exodus 16:2-15 the people are a little panicky. Can you blame them? They're in the desert. But God provides manna, the min ha, which is Hebrew for "What is this stuff?" and all is well.

In this time of offering let's remember that God provides. Let's all take a deep breath and ignore that lying panic that tells us there's only enough for our country, for our region, for our family. Let's learn to trust God a little more. We might discover that the heavenly manna has been falling all around us.

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 your calendars for **Sunday, October 23, 2 PM at St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Kitchener, ON.**

PARENTING CLASSES



Dr. Philip Squires, a local pediatrician will be offering parenting classes on Wednesday evenings, in October from 7 PM to 9 PM at Avon Public School. These classes are based on attachment theory and are appropriate for parents of toddlers to teenagers.

The sessions are:

Oct. 5: When children behave well and when they don't. A way to better understand your child.

Oct. 12: Frustration and defiance. What to do about "No!"

Oct. 19: Peer pressure, bully victim. When they're out of reach.

Oct. 26: Anxiety and Depression. Missing out on childhood.

To register call 519-271-2545. The fee is \$10 per evening or \$25 for the series.