

ZIONNEWS

SEPTEMBER 2013



A publication for the family of Zion Lutheran Church
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PASTOR'S DEVOTIONAL

"WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?"

"As Paul and Barnabus were going out, the people urged them to speak about these things again the next Sabbath." (Acts 13:42)



message.

Imagine that. When Paul finished preaching in Antioch, the worshipers who shook his hand at the conclusion of the service said, "Please preach that sermon again next week." What a startling request. To be sure, no one has ever said that to me in 29 years of preaching. After all, we want to be up on the latest. I suspect the people of Paul's day were no different. It was a new day and ordinarily they would want to hear a new

So what could Paul have said in that sermon to elicit such an unlikely response? Quite simply, he told the story of God's fierce love affair with the world, first through the people of Israel and then through Jesus of Nazareth. Paul spoke of God's faithfulness throughout history, about the covenant God established with Israel, and about how God rescued the people from slavery in Egypt and led them into the Promised Land. He told them that all of history had been preparation for Jesus' birth and that when the right time came, God sent Jesus out of God's own being. Paul told the people that, though Jesus was blameless, he was crucified, but the promise of his coming was fulfilled when he was raised from the dead. And in his life is the source and meaning of our own lives. To that sermon, the people said, as they were shaking hands with Paul, "Please preach that sermon again next week."

A number of years ago, indeed I had only been five or so years into ordained ministry, I attended a conference on evangelism. The speaker sparked lively debate by defining evangelism as "chatting about Jesus" and by asking us, "When was the last time you told your congregation what Jesus means to you?" At the hotel bar afterwards those remarks sparked a lively exchange. Many felt the speaker's question was dangerously simplistic, that it smacked of fundamentalism, and represented the kind of piety they had hoped to

escape by being part of a liberal denomination like the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.

As I reflected on the speaker's question, I came to realize it was both appropriate and challenging. As a Christian preacher I talk about Jesus a good deal, but talk about is quite different from expressing devotion. It is the difference between talking about a loved one and sending a love letter.

That speaker's question was still on my mind when I preached for the last time to my first parish of Mannheim/New Dundee where I had served for eight years. I spent almost the entire sermon speaking devotionally about Jesus, which would be about as unremarkable in some traditions as it is startling in our own. Here is how I concluded that sermon, which I titled, "What's It All About?":

"As I am about to leave, there is something I want to tell you. I want to tell you what Jesus means to me. I want to share my belief that everything depends on him. I want to urge you to lean on Jesus in times of trouble. I want to ask you to listen to his words of challenge. I want to tell you that I believe you can entrust your life to him. I want to affirm that he is Lord of this church, and that in his name you are freed to love one another and empowered to share that love with a hurting world. I want to profess that, though once people could not look at the face of God and live, now we are invited to look at the face of God in him, in Jesus, and live as we have never lived before. Jesus is Emmanuel, God with us, God with us all, whether we are together or apart. That's what it's all about. That's all I know. Amen."

My brothers and sisters. In the name of Jesus, I bid you farewell.

Goodbye. God be with you.

Rev. Douglas Reble
Assistant to the Bishop
Eastern Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada



A FINAL WORD FROM PASTOR DOUG

As I prepare to conclude my ministry at Zion Lutheran Church, Stratford on Sunday, September 15, it is important that I clarify the relationship that I will have with the congregation after my departure. It is very important that I do so. Especially since a number of people have made requests for me to

preside at their funerals or the funerals of their loved ones, or the weddings of their sons and daughters, or their own weddings, after I leave.

The reality is I will not be able to do so. In the 18 years I have been your pastor I have worked hard, as well as I am able, to treat everyone the same and to serve and care for everyone the same. How could I begin to pick and choose who to serve and which families to respond to? Reality is I can't. Another reality is I will still be in ministry as Assistant to the Bishop, and sometimes travelling within our synod territory which stretches from Windsor to Nova Scotia.

While I remain a pastor, I will no longer be your pastor. I will be your friend. Please know I will always love and cherish the friendship we have had, but please do not ask for further pastoral services such as counselling, baptisms, weddings and funerals. Pastor Dale Finch, your interim pastor, will serve you well, as will your new pastor whenever he or she is called. Thank you for your understanding.

Peace be with you,
Pastor Doug

***Please join us for a special farewell party for
Pastor Doug!***

You're invited to drop by and celebrate Pastor Doug's life, love,
and ministry!



Where: Stratford Country Club
Date: Sunday, September 8th
Time: 2 PM - 4:30 PM
Remarks at 3:30 PM

* Cash Bar * Entertainment * Refreshments *

For further information, please contact Liz Bomasuit or Wendy Holman



INTRODUCING OUR INTERIM PASTOR

Greetings to the members of Zion:

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you as interim pastor beginning September 16, 2013. It is both a blessing and a privilege.

I am married to Donna and our home is in Kitchener. We have two daughters, Lesley and Rebecca, and three grandchildren, Emily, Danny and Joe.

I have a BA (French, German, Latin) and an MA (French) from WLU, an MEd (applied linguistics) from U of T, and an MDiv from WLS. I taught at both university and secondary school levels for more than twenty years in New Brunswick, Saskatchewan, and Ontario before attending seminary. During my time as a teacher, I was an exchange teacher in Germany where I taught for a year in a German secondary school.

I was ordained in 1990 and served at Holy Trinity, Belleville for eight years and Reformation, Kitchener for seven years. I retired in 2005 and have done several interim ministries since my retirement.

Since 2005 Donna, who is a retired teacher, and I have served as volunteers with the CLWR and LWF in the West Bank, as well as spending time as volunteers in the Dominican Republic.

Blessings,
Pastor Dale Finch



WHAT, NO PIG ROAST?

Don't panic. We'll have our pig roast later in the fall. We thought Rally Sunday would be emotional enough, what with meeting new Sunday School teachers and saying goodbye to Pastor Doug. Instead, please join us in the Fellowship Hall for cake and coffee after the September 15th service to mark both these events

ALZHEIMER COFFEE BREAK DAY, SEPT. 29



The Alzheimer Coffee Break is an annual grassroots initiative to raise funds to support the programs and services of our local Alzheimer Society here in Perth County. Currently more than 1,400 people in Perth County suffer from this disease and related dementias. The Alzheimer Society exists to help these people and their families.

Our Alzheimer Coffee Break Day at Zion will take place on Sunday, September 29 after the service as a part of our fellowship time. All donations big or small will be accepted. Plan to attend! Spread the

word! Thank you for your support!

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS



We are quickly approaching the start of the Sunday School year and we are looking forward to seeing old friends as well as new. Rally Sunday this year is September 15, which offers the opportunity for children and parents to meet their teachers for the upcoming year.

Please keep in mind regular classes will start the following Sunday.

Anyone interested in becoming part of our Sunday School team, please contact Mitzi Podann by email at mitzianddoug@sympatico.ca or Tina Small at kerbysmall@yahoo.ca. Enjoy the remainder of the summer and see you soon.

ZION CHOIR NEWS



Choir Practice Resumes

As life progresses, one soon realizes that 'change' can be added to the short list of life's 'unavoidables,' along with death and taxes. Though many of us are uncomfortable with it, especially in large doses, we know that change has a way of stretching, pushing and challenging us; it can be a bit of a divine nudge towards becoming different. So although we may not like it, it's not all bad!

In the Zion Choir, we constantly seek to recall that our good Lord is perfection, and in our flawed state of human imperfection, we give thanks that God honours our efforts without looking for us to be perfect. It is a truth that often gets lost in the rush of our lives, one that can bring relief from the pressures we create for ourselves. It is sufficient that we have faith in our good and immutable God.

As we enjoy the long warm days of summer, it is a good opportunity to reflect on change and how we decide to let it change us. What would I like to do differently? What new challenges would I like to take on? Are there new ways I might consider giving to my community?

The Zion Choir rehearses each Thursday evening from September 12 to the beginning of June. All are welcome, whatever your voice range or experience. A wealth of church choir music awaits you. Sing praises to our immutable God!

Lynne Hopcraft, Choir Director

P.S. The Zion Choir rehearses on Thursday evenings, in the church sanctuary, from 7:30 PM to 9 PM, beginning Thursday, September 12. All ages are welcome. Questions? Contact Lynne Hopcraft, our choir director, at hopcrafttutoring@yahoo.com or 519-274-3120. She'd love to hear from you.

ZION TABLE FOR SENIORS



Zion Table For Seniors, a beloved ministry at Zion promoting fun, food, and friendship, returns on Tuesday, September 24 at 12 noon. Please let Doris Bartlett (519-271-9622) or Phyllis Jeffery (519-271-3668) know by Tuesday, September 17 if you can attend. Lunch cost is only \$10. A deal by any name!

Our special after-dinner guests to kick off the program year are "The Scotts." Come join us for some oldtime country music and dance. All are welcome!

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY



Prayer Shawl Ministry

The Prayer Shawl Group will start again on Monday, September 9 at 2 PM in the Parlour. Beginners and experts alike are more than welcome. It certainly is a fun way to enjoy a Monday afternoon. It is also a ministry as shawls and blankets are given to people in hospital and care facilities, and to people who need a reminder that God loves them unconditionally. For more information, please contact Gerda (Gerry) Bornath at 519-513-5400.



Horst Koehler on June 29
Irene Brazil on July 4
Faye Mohr on July 11
Steven Tuer, July 23
Judith Bauer, July 29



Sophie Jean Berry, daughter of Ryan & Sara
on August 4
Norah Anne Richter, daughter of Christopher
& Emily on August 11



Dallas Pearson & Michelle Le Souder, on
September 28

RESTORATION CAMPAIGN STILL NEEDS YOUR HELP

The restoration work on our beautiful church home is nearing completion, and you have given generously to get us this far. Thank you!



Together we must still raise just over \$40K to meet our commitment to this project, so please remember to give as you are able. Any amount is welcome, and donations may be dropped off to the church office any time.

If you'd like information on the campaign, or would like to help with the fundraising campaign, please contact Ron Deichert (519-271-2764) or Bob Schwalm (519-271-1103).



ZION WOMEN OF FAITH

As I write this it is still July!! Hopefully everyone had a good summer. Rested and ready to get back into the swing of things.

I am pleased to announce that ladies of "Women of Faith" have raised with the 2 fundraisers we did this year, a total of \$3,000. Pat yourselves on the back. Thank you to everyone who helped with the fundraisers and supported our ladies. This money will go towards the Restoration Fund.

We are currently in **Need of help** for the flower committee. Please call Linda Springer (519-273-2093) if you could help. It would mean working with another member to arrange flowers on the altar if needed and take them off the altar on Sunday. This is a one-month commitment per year.

Dates to Remember:

Board Meeting, Monday, September 9 at 7 PM

Monthly Meeting, Wednesday, September 18 at 7:30 PM

All ladies are welcome to join us. September is the beginning of a new year in the church. Why not start something new with being a part of our ladies group, a place to grow in faith, socialize and get to know each other better. We are called to serve and that is what we try to do. For more information, please contact Linda Springer (519-273-2093), WOF President.

NEW VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR ZION MEALS ON WHEELS



We are currently seeking new volunteers to join our very dedicated Zion Meals on Wheels team. Through 'One Care,' Zion's team delivers meals to clients four times a year. This wonderful service helps individuals to remain in their own home. Clients are most appreciative of our help.

If you would like more information, please contact me at 519-271-3187.

Heather Wickenheiser
Co-Ordinator Zion Meals On Wheels

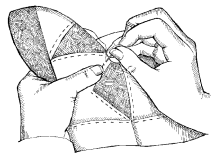


FRIENDSHIP MEAL MINISTRY

Zion will host Stratford’s Friendship Meal on Friday, September 27. This meal serves residents of our community in need of a nutritious meal and an opportunity to visit with friends. The meal is served at 5 PM.

Members and friends of Zion are invited to help with this meal. Preparation for the meal begins at 1 PM. Assistance is needed in setting tables, preparing food, serving the meal, washing dishes and cleanup. Your help in any of these tasks is appreciated. If you can help, please call Sister Jean Widmeyer at 519-273-6810. Thank you!

ZION QUILTERS



QUILTING GROUP

Another beloved group at Zion, affectionately known as the “Quilting Queens,” are our quilters who meet on Wednesday mornings from 9 AM to 1:30 PM in our Assembly Room. Quilting, once a lost art, has become fashionable again. It is a craft enhancing the beauty in God’s creation. Our quilting group always welcomes new members, be you experienced or a novice wanting to learn the art of quilting or doing tied quilts for CLWR and for local needs. If you can’t stay all morning, not to worry. A couple of hours is just fine. Your presence is what is appreciated. Quilting begins on Wednesday, September 18. Please call Verlie Sippel at 519-271-9107 for information, or if you have a quilt you would like quilted. Again, all are welcome!



BEAVERS & CUBS REGISTRATION

An important program for the children of our congregation and community is our 17th Zion Group which is sponsored by Zion. A co-ed group open to boys and girls between ages 5-11, the Beavers and Cubs meet on Tuesday evenings at the church, at 6:45 PM.

Registration for all Beaver, Cub, and Scout groups in the city of Stratford takes place on Tuesday, September 3, from 6:30 PM to 8 PM at the Rec. Complex. If you miss that, simply come to the first Beaver and Cub gathering on Tuesday, September 10 at 6:45 PM. **Volunteer adult help is desperately needed to keep this program active. No experience necessary, come join the fun.** If you have any questions, please contact Pearl Alles (519-273-0457).

“Scouting Rocks!!!”

SEPTEMBER VOLUNTEERS

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

DATE	COMMUNION ASSISTANTS	GREETERS	READERS	USHER CAPTAINS	COUNTING CAPTAINS
Sept 1	Linda Weitzel & Wayne Young	Rita Mueller & grandchildren	Mary-Lou Drown	Fritz Steigmeier	Audrey Miller
Sept 8	N/A	Darrell & Judy Renecker	Stephen Fischer	Fritz Steigmeier	Audrey Miller
Sept 15	Janet Ahrens & Sharon Reble	Mike & Wendy Holman	Andrew Famme	Steve Lamont	Rob Illman
Sept 22	N/A	Bruce & Beth Sippel	Bob Gladding	Steve Lamont	Rob Illman
Sept 29	N/A	Al & Lorraine Skowby	Kurt Gough	Ed Illman	Cathy McCord

ZION CHURCH FINANCIAL REPORT

	Current	Benevolence
Monthly Requirements	\$28,000.00	\$4,600.00
July Income	\$18,137.25	\$3,398.00
July Expenses	\$20,817.00	\$3,398.00

CURRENT FUND DEFICIT (as of July 31, 2013): \$-28,137.58



A NOTE ABOUT OUR SUMMER DEFICIT:

It is normal for this congregation to finish the summer with a deficit in our Current Fund. Mostly this means many of us have been away, visiting friends and loved ones, and not attending church as regularly as we might during the rest of the year.

It is now time to get caught up as we head into the last four months of the year. God has so richly blessed us, and the gifts you offer each week are essential to the work we do, both in the church and in our community. Thank you for being so generous.

Let us give God as God has given us.