

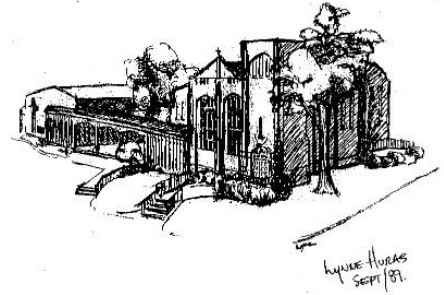
# ZIONNEWS

## JULY/AUGUST 2024

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

*"I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?" – Isaiah 43:19.*



The Report of the Bishop has been a regular part of every synod assembly I have attended throughout my years of ordained ministry. It is an occasion for the synodical bishop to share highlights of their ministry and the work of the synod over the time since the previous assembly as well as offering their vision for the future work of the Church of Jesus Christ in that particular synod. The report is often very detailed and offers specific insights and challenges for the assembly that consists of persons from congregations in diverse communities that serve a common call to serve our Lord in this time and place.

This year's Eastern Synod Assembly also included a Report of the Bishop, but one that was quite different from any I have previously experienced. It was the final report of Bishop Michael Pryse to the synod he has faithfully served for twenty-six years, one that he acknowledged "will be much briefer than it has been in the past." It was a report in which Bishop Pryse spent some time reflecting on the assembly's theme of "Let There Be Greening," a greening that includes care for creation, peace in our world, greening of our ministries, and greening of our synod's leadership. It was a time for our bishop to offer his thanks to the many persons who have served with him over the years of his tenure, stating that "I am leaving office with a heart that is bursting with gratitude and full of hope and expectation for the life of our synod." As might be expected, there were many tears shed in the assembly hall as the gathering of God's people rose for a standing ovation to express our gratitude to Bishop Pryse for all the ways in which he has been a blessing to us for so many years.

While a synod assembly is always an important occasion for Lutheran Christians, this year's assembly truly felt like a historical moment. As I sat through both the working sessions and the assembly banquet (in which I was honoured to be included in the group of pastors who were recognized for celebrating significant anniversaries of their ordinations), I reflected back on the many ways in which my life and ministry have been blessed and transformed by the ministry of Bishop Pryse. As I continue to give thanks for his caring and faithful service to Lord and to the Church that bears the name of our Saviour, I am also looking forward to a time of new beginnings as we welcome our Bishop-elect, Pastor Carla Blakley, and as we pray for her in this time of transition and the beginning of her ministry among us. Some of you may remember that Pastor Blakley preached at Zion in June of 2018, when she was representing Canadian Lutheran World Relief. Our new bishop will bring her gifts and commitment to the work of the gospel that I know will be a blessing to us as we move forward to experience the "new thing" that God is doing among us. May we pray that God will bless our new bishop so that she might be a blessing to others, sharing the blessed hope that is ours in Jesus Christ our Lord.

While we know that change is certain and inevitable, it can also be a time of uncertainty and anxiety. But no matter what circumstances we may find ourselves experiencing, we can always live in the sure and certain hope that because "*the steadfast love of the LORD never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness*" (Lamentations 3:22-23) that God is with us through whatever times of change we may be experiencing, comforting us with the unchanging grace that is ours in the presence of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Bishop Pryse's closing words in his final Report of the Bishop remind us of this resilient hope that is ours in all times and circumstances:

- "I know you and I know our history. I know that we are resilient and adaptable. But above all, I know that we are united in our shared love of the Gospel and in the transforming power of that Gospel to carry us and guide us regardless of circumstances. Dear Eastern Synod siblings, fear not! To echo Julian of Norwich, 'All will be well and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well!' Thank you and God bless you!"

We give thanks for the many ways in which we have been blessed by the ministry of Bishop Pryse as we look forward to the blessings that God will bestow upon us through the ministry we will share with Bishop-elect Carla Blakley. May we look toward our future with confident hope as we experience the many ways in which our Lord will reveal the "new thing" that will happen in, around, and through us!

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Jeff Laustsen

# **HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE “JUNE” CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING**

## **HIGHLIGHTS**



The June 19, 2024 Congregational Council Meeting was held in-person in the Parlour.

The second draft proof of the Photo Directory has been received and sent back. Once we receive the changes in the second draft proof and confirm the changes, the Directory will be ready for printing.

Results from the Town Hall meeting, May 4, 2024, have been reviewed by the Future Directions Task Force. Some clear themes developed. The materials that were shared by participants have been grouped into six categories: worship, accessibility, congregational life, youth and family ministry, community outreach and hospitality; there is also a miscellaneous category for items that did not fit into these other areas. The Committee will meet again on Wednesday, June 26 to continue their work in producing a report and recommendations.

A Survey will be taken over the summer to determine if there is interest in re-establishing a Nursery for Sunday Worship and how many children might use the Nursery.

The Bandshell and Pavilion in Upper Queens Park have been booked for September 8 for the annual picnic in the park and Rally Sunday. A BBQ is being considered.

A date has been set for the “One Man, Three Legends” show, September 29, 2024 @ 2:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. Advertising posters and tickets will be available shortly. Proceeds from this fundraiser will be designated for the purchase and installation of a chair lift at the main entrance to the church. Future fundraisers will be designated for the purchase and installation of a chair lift in the courtyard area leading to the Fellowship Hall.

The yearly Seniors’ Birthday Party will be Friday, October 4 from 2:00 p.m-4:00 p.m. Plans are being made to resume the Senior Luncheons in the fall.

The Property Committee has several projects.

A meeting was held with a City of Stratford representative regarding a possible crosswalk on Erie Street. The City’s representative indicated that a pedestrian crossover at St. David Street is one of the locations they are considering an installation of a pedestrian crossover.

A contractor has been contacted about putting screens on two of the basement windows before July.

The Committee obtained a quote for painting the balcony floor, by the end of August, and the

quote was approved by Congregational Council.

A company has been contacted about grading the gravel parking lot and line painting the paved parking lot.

We will have two guests in worship over the next few weeks to share “mission moments” focusing on the work of their organizations in our community. A representative from the Stratford Connection Centre and L’Arche Stratford will be our guests.

Donations/offerings, can continue to be completed via our Church website, including additional options for QR Code and 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.

## **INTRODUCING OUR NEW BISHOP-ELECT**

### **REV. CARLA BLAKLEY**



Rev  
Carla Blakley

**Current Position**  
Senior Pastor

### **Previous Position(s)**

2021- now Senior Pastor Lakeveiw United Lutheran Partnership

2017-2021 Director of Community Engagement and Fundraising and Communication.  
Canadian Lutheran World Relief, Winnipeg

2008- 2017 Senior Pastor, Bread of Life Lutheran Church Regina, Saskatchewan

2010– 2013 Appointment as Assistant to the National Bishop in Global Relations Winnipeg,

ELCIC

1999-2008 Assistant Pastor Christ Lutheran Church Regina, Saskatchewan

1995-1999 Associate Pastor Central Lutheran Church Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan

## **Congregational Membership**

Lakeview, Yellow Grass United Lutheran Partnership

## **Date & Year of Ordination**

Friday, June 9, 1995

## **Education & Earned Degrees (with institutions and years, most recent first)**

2023-2024 Certificate in Grief Education and counselling University of Toronto

2017-21 CFRE – Certified Fundraising Professional

2013-14 Clinical Pastoral Education – Level 2 Palliative care

2013 Suicide Prevention training – Certificate

2012 Stephen Ministry Leader Training Certificate– Dallas, Texas July 2012

2004-2007 Master of Arts Religious Studies, University of Regina (Thesis “Que(e)r(y)ing the Image of God”)

2007 Mission Developers/Community Organizing Certificate – ELCA Chicago

1990-1995 Master of Divinity, Waterloo Lutheran Seminary, Waterloo Ontario (Thesis “The Tension between Interreligious Dialogue and Christian Mission”)

1996-2012 Annual Training – Evaluation of High Risk Sex Offenders – Winnipeg, Community Notification

Conference – Federal Dept. of Justice.

1987-1990 Bachelor of Arts Religious Studies, University of Regina

1988-1989 Study Abroad – University of Copenhagen, Denmark

1986-1987 Study Abroad – Jambi, Indonesia with Canadian International Development Agency – Water well development

1977-1982 Grade 8-12, Campbell Colligate High School, Regina

## **List up to three (3) current or past synod or churchwide experiences that would inform your service as bishop of this Synod.**

Appointment as Assistant to the National Bishop in Global Relations Winnipeg, ELCIC

Director of Community Engagement, Fundraising, and Communication Canadian Lutheran World Relief, Winnipeg

Board Member of the ELCIC, GSI Board, currently

## **List up to three (3) current or past community activities that would inform your service as bishop of this Synod.**

I have extensive experience on Boards at the municipal, provincial and federal levels.  
Chair – Board of management and fundraising of the Humanitarian Coalition, Ottawa  
Chair – Transition House, Regina, Saskatchewan  
Chair – Public Disclosure Committee Ministry of Justice – recommending disclosure of high risk sex offenders released into communities.  
Saskatchewan Synod Same Sex Dialogue Task Force  
Director – Board of Regents, Luther College, University of Regina

**What gifts would you bring to the office of Bishop of this Synod?  
(250 word maximum)**

I am a compassionate, passionate and empathetic leader.  
I appreciate governance and policies.  
I work effectively in multifaith and ecumenical environments. I have worked with the ELCIC's international partners in many countries.  
I appreciate the work of Reconciliation, and decolonization, in Canada. Respecting First Nations and deepening relationships is important work.  
I am not afraid of hard conversations and challenging decisions.  
When I was the Assistant to the National Bishop, we worked to decolonize the Missionary program and recall the missionaries.  
When I was the Director at CLWR, we closed down the material commodities program. I listened to our international partners to hear what they needed, how our commodities were actually damaging to their local economies.  
Taking time to hold space and listen, have focus groups, we successfully transformed this program. The work around 2SLGBTI folks is also close to my heart. I am an advocate and ally and work in the community to promote God's expansive love to all people.  
Civil discourse has changed in our country but I believe the church can model compassionate, empathetic and deep conversations.  
I understand fundraising, and deeply appreciate the conversations around finances and stewardship.  
I love my ELCIC, deeply in its diversity. I am a strong Biblical preacher.  
I believe God's love is transformation.  
I love to inspire, invigorate and encourage our Churches. I love to mentor and hold space for our pastors, lay leaders, deacons, councils.

**Describe your leadership style. (250 word maximum)**

I have deep faith in God and Jesus Christ, this informs my leadership style. Love is powerful and transformative.  
My leadership style is collaborative, I am a bridge builder and a people gatherer. Community organizing is a model I use effectively, I listen, ask questions, seek to understand. I am not afraid of hard decisions, the right thing is not always the easy thing. I have proudly been the

first woman in all of my calls over the last 29 years. I am adaptable, I am able to challenge my privilege, my biases and will always be learning. Integrity, compassion, love and empathy in leadership is necessary. This is my key to strong, passionate leadership in all areas of my work and community life. I just completed a certificate in Grief education and counseling. We live in a death averse, grief illiterate society. I am fascinated how a grief lens can be applied to so many situations. Churches are changing in their demographics, church buildings are closing, a conversation about grief helps us move forward. Grief conversations in management helps deal with the fear around change. The church has been and will always be in a state of transformation. This is exciting as God's love will always find a way forward. Our job is sometimes to open the channels.

**What do you see as the principal challenge to this Synod in the next six (6) years, and how would you address it? (250 word maximum)**

Church demographics are changing. Churches are in decline. Church buildings will have to be transformed. Ecumenical partnerships, like the one I currently serve in are important models in moving forward.

Church leadership is strained and church leaders are under tremendous pressure, they will need support. Grief management will be key, but God's church will be transformed.

**What would be your top three (3) priorities for your first three (3) years of service? (250 word maximum)**

Every time I have started a new call, I have become a lover and a historian. This has served me well. I would visit Congregations, listen to councils, and begin community organizing. I have taken time to listen, and learn to love the people and the congregations. I would listen deeply to hear the concerns, the challenges, seek to understand and then trust that God is at work. Inspire people to see God at work even within challenging time. Sometimes it is in the challenges, in the Lenten wilderness that we can most clearly see and hear God.

## **SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS**

**Sunday School is currently on a break until September.**



In order to organize classes and arrange for teachers when Sunday School resumes in September, we are reaching out to all parents/grandparents wishing to enroll their child(ren)/grandchild(ren) in the Sunday School program. If you could please email me the child(ren)'s name(s), current grade(s) as of September, 2024, and **whether or not they would be participating in Sunday School** to Paula at [pauley\\_mcnaughton@hotmail.com](mailto:pauley_mcnaughton@hotmail.com).

Please note that any child turning four (4) years of age in 2024 is eligible to start Sunday School in September, 2024. Once we have our students registered, we will be in a better position to arrange our classes.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you for your assistance and co-operation!

Paula McNaughton  
Sunday School Coordinator

## WHERE ARE THEY NOW ?



**Confirmation 2014**  
Pastor Karen Kuhnert, Pastor Dale Finch, Pastor Jeff Laustsen  
Andrew Famme, Olivia Bauwens, Amy Chandler

This is the  
“CONFIRMATION  
CLASS OF 2014”. Where  
are they now?

We are trying something new and would greatly appreciate your help. We are enquiring as to what has happened to the confirmands of 2014. Did they complete High School and go on to College or University? Or did they start working right after finishing school? Where are they living now? Are they married? Do they have any children? Could you PLEASE share this information with us via email at [zionlc@golden.net](mailto:zionlc@golden.net). If parents would prefer we contact the confirmand directly, please provide

contact information to the Church by calling 519-271-8527 or by email. We are looking forward to your response. We will publish the results in our “September” Newsletter.



Thank you for your help!!!



**IT'S COMING BACK !**

**ZION'S "80 AND OVER SENIORS  
BIRTHDAY PARTY"**

**SAVE THE DATE:      FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2024**

**MORE INFORMATION TO FOLLOW !**

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**HAVE A FUN-  
FILLED, SAFE  
SUMMER !!**

**FROM**

**PASTOR JEFF,  
SISTER JEAN  
JANE & SUE**

# We Love Our Volunteers

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



Date	Greeters	Readers	Usher Captains	Altar Guild	Counting Captains
July 7	Gerald & Isabel Cook	Mary-Lou Drown	Darrell Renecker	Shirley Whittaker	Bill Hoffard
July 14	Wayne & Linda Faulhafer	Carmen Beck	Brian Coe	Irene Ehgoetz	Audrey Miller
July 21	Jim & Judy Stanley	Linda Faulhafer	Jerry Terhaerd	Sister Jean Widmeyer	Audrey Miller
July 28	Gerry & Janet Ahrens	Glenn Rittinger	Tom Cosstick	Ellen Wolfe	Murray Scholl



Date	Greeters	Readers	Usher Captains	Altar Guild	Counting Captains
August 4	Robert & Beverley Keutsch	Isabel Cook	Darrell Renecker	Carmen Beck	Murray Scholl
August 11	Darrell & Judy Renecker	Murray Scholl	Brian Coe	Shirley Whittaker	Irene West
August 18	Paul & Janet Jefferyk	Stephen Fischer	Tom Cosstick	Irene Ehgoetz	Irene West
August 25	Bob & Marilyn Wells	Marilyn Wells	Jerry Terhaerd	Sister Jean Widmeyer	Carmen Beck

“THANK YOU” to our Volunteers for giving of your time!  
Worship would not be the same without you!!