

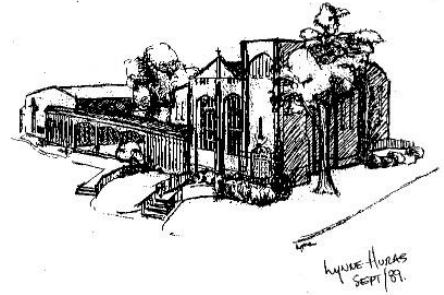
# ZION NEWS

## JULY/AUGUST 2025

A publication for the family of Zion Lutheran Church  
202 Erie St., Stratford, ON N5A 2M8

Website: [www.zionstratford.com](http://www.zionstratford.com)

Email: [zionlc@golden.net](mailto:zionlc@golden.net)



### PASTOR'S DEVOTIONAL



*“Do not remember the former things or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?” – Isaiah 43:18-19.*

The phrase “expect the unexpected” aptly describes many of my experiences in my life and ministry (including how a boy from New Jersey ended up serving as a pastor in Stratford, Ontario!). This reality of unexpected events changing the course of one’s life happened to me three years ago when I received an email from my seminary requesting nominations to its alumni association board. In the past, I have usually ignored such requests, since my work as a pastor in both congregation and community filled up all my time; but for some reason, this one drew my attention to the point where I responded with questions about the association and the responsibilities of board membership. Before long, I found my name on the nominating ballot, and three years ago I began to serve on the board of the United Lutheran Seminary Alumni Association, serving the school that was founded in 2017 as the merger of the former Gettysburg and Philadelphia Seminaries.

My board membership proved to be an enjoyable experience, and since most of the meetings were on Zoom it did not require any travel, nor did it require a tremendous amount of time. Then one day I received a message from another board member who was stepping into the role of president when the current president needed to resign for health reasons. The new president is also one of my seminary classmates, so after reminiscing about our student years

he asked if I would be willing to fill the position of vice-president that he had formerly held. Since I was enjoying my experience with the seminary alumni, I agreed to take this position; but no sooner had I agreed that I was informed that the vice-president would be in line to become the president – a position that in my wildest dreams I never thought would happen to me! After a few deep breaths, I agreed to both the current vice-president position and to the eventual position as president, which finally happened when on Tuesday, June 17 I officially became president of the alumni association of my seminary.

As if this unexpected turn of events was not enough of a change in my life and ministry, it also led to my reintroduction to the Chautauqua Institution, a wonderful summer community on the shores of Lake Chautauqua in western New York State. I was first introduced to Chautauqua during my seminary internship in Jamestown, New York and have visited there numerous times; but for some unknown reason, Susan and I had not visited there since 2004. It was at an alumni board meeting that a member mentioned that the Lutheran House on the grounds of the Institution was looking for chaplains to lead worship during the summer seasons; in another unexpected turn of events, my application was accepted and Susan and I spent a wonderful week at Chautauqua last August. Then one day (the “unexpected” theme continues!) I saw an announcement for auditions for the Chautauqua Choir for the 2025 season. Soon we found ourselves auditioning for the choir, the result being that we will be returning to this wonderful community for several weeks this summer, singing at worship and experiencing all that Chautauqua has to offer (and soon to be serving on the board of the Lutheran House).

Expecting the unexpected has not only been a recent phenomenon in my life but the call of all Christians who are called to follow our Lord Jesus Christ in the path of discipleship. It is a call to openness to new horizons and challenges, of being open to new ways in which we might serve others in Christ’s name and find ourselves in situations and circumstances we never could have imagined. It is the openness to new possibilities that is at the heart of Paul’s blessing in Ephesians: *“Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask for or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, for ever and ever. Amen.”* (Ephesians 3:20-21).

Among the many fine lectures I have attended at Chautauqua was a week-long series with Douglas John Hall, the great Canadian theologian who taught for many years at McGill University in Montreal. I was first introduced to Dr. Hall as a seminarian, and his lectures reminded me of his writings on the future of the church, and how our mission as the church in the modern era is to “expect the unexpected,” to follow our Lord on new and unfamiliar paths in the assurance that our work is not in vain, that the church of Jesus Christ will always have a mission and purpose in a world hungering for the good news of our Lord and Saviour:

- “This much, therefore, we may conclude with *confidence*: the Church that is enabled to endure the suffering of those who follow Jesus Christ into earth’s uncertain future will itself have a future. Willing to lose itself for his sake who lost his life for the world’s sake, it will find its life. And however insignificant and inglorious that life may appear in comparison with all that our imperial Christ past has conditioned us to expect, it will be *exceptional!*” – *The Future of the Church*.

We can “expect the unexpected,” knowing that life will at times present us with challenges and opportunities that are far beyond anything we could imagine; but no matter how unexpected this future may be, we can always expect the good news that is at the heart of our faith, that “*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). May we always have confidence to expect God to abide with us no matter how unexpected our lives and circumstances may be!

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Jeff Laustsen

## **HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE JUNE 18, 2025 CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING**



The June 18, 2025 Congregational Council Meeting was held in-person in the Parlour and via Zoom.

The Congregational Council will schedule a special meeting in the fall, separate from the regular monthly Congregational Council Meeting, to further discuss the report and recommendations made by the Future Directions Task Force.

The Seniors’ Luncheon was held on Friday, June 13th with 44 seniors attending and the guest speaker was a police officer from the Stratford Police Department. Following a summer break the next Seniors’ Luncheon will be held on Friday, September 12th.

Our Zion Choir concluded their season of worship leadership on Sunday, May 25th and will resume singing after Labour Day.

Rally Sunday will be held in our Church building and will include the installation of the Sunday School teachers and staff at worship, the first day of Sunday School classes, and a special fellowship lunch after worship in the Fellowship Hall.

Confirmation Class had its last class meeting on Thursday, May 22nd and will resume in September.

Our Adult Bible Study class will have its final meeting on Thursday, June 26th and will resume in September.

To date, 242 tickets have been sold for the “We Three Kings” Elvis concert on July 27th.

Ritz Architect was in to complete their egress assessment and found that the stairwell from the courtyard entrance to the Fellowship Hall could not accommodate a platform lift. Tim informed the Council members that there is a platform lift that will meet egress requirements, however, it is more expensive. Therefore, the installation of the platform lift in this area is being placed on hold currently, due to this development. Feltz Design will proceed with applying to the city for the building permits for the other two locations.

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.

## **SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS**

### **Reminder for Sunday School Registration for September 2025**



**Parents/Grandparents:** Have you registered your child(ren) or Grandchild(ren) for Sunday School? By Registering them is not a commitment for them having to be here every Sunday. By Registering them, helps us arrange our classes and arrange for the number of teachers we need.

Children/Grandchildren eligible for Sunday School include any child turning four (4) years of age in 2025 right through to children in Grade 6.

If a child(ren) has left the Sunday School program for any reason and would like to return, they are more than welcome!

It is quite easy to register them. All we require is the child(ren)'s names(s), current grade(s) as of September 2025. You may email the information to [pauley\\_mcnoughton@hotmail.com](mailto:pauley_mcnoughton@hotmail.com) (between pauley and mcnaughton there is an underscore).

All children/grandchildren of members need to be registered to attend Sunday School. Any visiting families with children 4 years of age in 2025 right through to children in Grade 6 are welcome without registering.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you for your assistance and co-operation.

Paula McNaughton,  
Sunday School Coordinator

## **STRATFORD CONNECTION CENTRE**

Please see the list below for the latest “**much needed**” items. Whatever help you can provide is greatly appreciated!

**Please drop off donations in the bins located at the back of the Sanctuary  
or inside the office entrance door.**



The sandwich makers for the Connection Centre would greatly appreciate donations of food gift cards from Walmart or Food Basics. Any support you are able to provide is most welcome.  
Thank You!

## **PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY**



The ladies of the Prayer Shawl Ministry want to wish everyone a “safe and happy holiday”. The Prayer Shawl Ministry will be continuing to meet throughout the summer on Monday afternoons from 2 pm to 4 pm in the Parlour.

You are invited to come and see what they are knitting and crocheting and spend some time with them!

Nancy Schaff

## **SAVE THE DATE !**



The “80 & Over Birthday Party for 2025 will be held on Friday, October 24, 2025.

More information will follow in upcoming bulletins and Newsletters closer to the date.

## **SENIORS’ LUNCHEON ON JUNE 13<sup>TH</sup> AT ZION**

The third Seniors’ Luncheon post COVID was held on Friday, June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025. “Maribeth Catering” from Mitchell provided another mouth-watering meal of BBQ smoked pork chops, potato salad, carrot salad and macaroni salad with fresh strawberry shortcake for dessert and was enjoyed by forty-four (44) participants.





Constable Rachel Willows from the Stratford Police Department joined the festivities providing education on the numerous scams that are circulating right now. Constable Willows provided instructions and tips should you receive a scam phone call or email. Positive feedback was received that it was a real learning presentation. "Thank you" to Mary-Lou Drown and Janet Ahrens for arranging this "educational" entertainment.

**Just a reminder that there will NOT be a lunch in July and August. The next Seniors' Luncheon will be on Friday, September 12<sup>th</sup>. Entertainment for September will include Tom Edge who will be talking about how to be comfortable in conversation with a blind person. A second guest, Marlin Nagtegaal, and his seeing eye dog, Champ will also be on hand to talk about his experiences. Hope to see you there!**

Below are just a few of the many pictures taken on June 13<sup>th</sup>. The smiles say it all!







A big “THANK YOU” to the Seniors’ Luncheon Co-ordinator, Irene Ehgoetz for another job well done; Callers: Jan Bennewitz, Carmen Beck, Wendy Hansen and Laurie Snow; Janet Ahrens and Mary-Lou Down for arranging the entertainment; Dianne Mann for her decorations and taking charge of the kitchen with her volunteers: Janet Ahrens, Carmen Beck, Laurie Snow, Sheila Wittig and Marie Ehgoetz who all contributed to another great success of our third Seniors’ Luncheon!

**FYI:**

We would like to enlighten you on how the process for the Seniors’ Luncheon works.

You receive a call from one of the four (4) callers asking if you would like to attend the upcoming luncheon. If you say yes, your name is then added to our list of participants. On the Tuesday before the luncheon being held on the Friday, the number of participants is called in to the caterer to order that number of meals. It is at this time we are committed to pay for the number of meals we have ordered.

## **INVITATION**

**Members and Friends of Zion Lutheran Church Invite you to Zion’s next**

### **SENIORS’ LUNCHEON**

**On FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12<sup>TH</sup> 2025**

**Starting at 12:00 Noon**

**202 Erie Street – enter off Erie Street**

**519-271-8527**

**Wheelchair accessible**

**On the Queensland bus route**

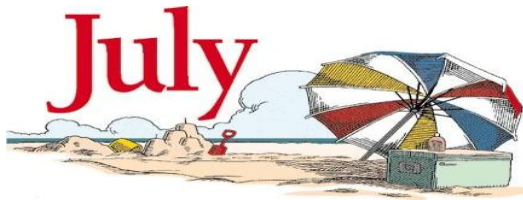
**\$20.00**

**Entertainment: “To be Announced” in our Sunday Bulletin**

**Worship Sundays at 10:00 A.M.**

**Everyone Welcome!!!**

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 6	Darrell & Judy Renecker	Linda Faulhafer	Darrell Renecker	Shirley Whittaker	Laurie Snow
July 13	Jim & Judy Stanley	Glenn Rittinger	Tom Cosstick	Ellen Wolfe	Laurie Snow
July 20	Ron & Nancy Hesas	Mary-Lou Drown	Brian Coe	Carmen Beck	Irene West
July 27	Ellen Wolfe & Carmen Beck	Carmen Beck	Jerry Terhaerd	Sister Jean	Irene West



Date	Greeters	Readers	Usher Captains	Altar Guild	Counting Captains
August 3	Bob & Marilyn Wells	Isabel Cook	Darrell Renecker	Shirley Whittaker	Carmen Beck
August 10	Tom & Joanne Cosstick	Fritz Steigmeier	Tom Cosstick	Ellen Wolfe	Carmen Beck
August 17	Gerald & Isabel Cook	Aline Kouhi-Klemencic	Brian Coe	Carmen Beck	Janet Chandler
August 24	Brad & Sherri Beatty	Marilyn Wells	Jerry Terhaerd	Sister Jean	Janet Chandler
August 31	Gerry & Janet Ahrens	Stephen Fischer	Tom Cosstick	Shirley Whittaker	Mary-Lou Drown

**“THANK YOU” to our Volunteers for giving of your time!**

**Worship would not be the same without you!!**



**HAVE A FUN-FILLED, SAFE SUMMER  
WITH FAMILY & FRIENDS**



**ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH** is thrilled to announce that we are hosting our “2<sup>nd</sup> Concert” to raise funds for our much-needed stair lifts!

### ***“WE THREE KINGS”***

**Featuring Three (3) World-Renowned Tribute Artists from Three (3) Countries**

**Depicting Three (3) Decades of the King of Rock & Roll!**

**Hugo Colin (United States) ♥ Roy LeBlanc (Canada) ♥ Oliver Steinhoff (Germany)**

**JULY 27<sup>TH</sup> @ 2:00 P.M.**

**Zion Lutheran Church  
202 Erie Street  
Stratford, ON**

**Tickets are still available through the Church Office (519-271-8527) Tuesday through Friday mornings for \$40.00 each or through Ticketscene [www.ticketscene.ca/events/50328](http://www.ticketscene.ca/events/50328)**

**Please Spread  
The Word!**

# SUMMER WORD SEARCH

S B W K I S U N W M K W V  
Y E K Q H X A E S K O V P  
N A D A O B D N J I N A M  
G C L C T B W M D T U C O  
N H I P L Q N T H E F A R  
I I C E C R E A M A R T M  
W D R P O P S I C L E I C  
S W I M N I E J T A M O A  
B A O E T C G U L D M N M  
R T A N E N S M H A U T P  
I H C A E I O P S V S L I  
S A Y E U C P O O L N O N  
V R S E S S A L G N U S G

**WORD BANK:**

BBQ

BEACH

CAMPING

FUN

HOT

ICE CREAM

JUMP

KITE

PICNIC

PLAY

POOL

POPSICLE

SAND

SUMMER

SUN

SUNGLASSES

SWIM

SWING

VACATION



# Card Games

E	P	I	Q	U	E	T	Z	B	R	I	D	G	E
M	R	W	H	I	S	T	I	P	S	F	B	B	L
H	A	H	E	A	R	T	S	G	O	F	I	S	H
R	K	C	C	E	S	K	A	T	S	A	N	A	C
W	P	N	N	U	E	P	O	K	E	R	D	R	O
A	Y	A	F	R	E	E	C	E	L	L	I	S	N
T	R	T	T	A	R	A	C	C	A	B	A	E	I
T	A	N	K	I	J	U	A	Y	B	L	M	D	P
E	M	A	W	P	E	S	M	A	L	I	D	A	K
N	I	F	A	A	I	N	G	M	A	T	L	P	O
L	D	L	B	N	Q	E	C	S	Y	Z	O	S	O
V	S	F	O	S	O	H	H	E	L	L	O	P	R

BACCARAT  
BLITZ  
BRIDGE  
CANASTA  
CASINO  
CRIBBAGE  
EUCHRE  
FAN TAN  
FREE CELL  
GO FISH

HEARTS  
MAO  
NERTZ  
OH HELL  
OLD MAID  
PATIENCE  
PINOCHLE  
PIQUET  
POKER  
PYRAMID

ROOK  
RUMMY  
SKAT  
SLAP JACK  
SNAP  
SPADES  
SPIT  
WAR  
WATTEN  
WHIST