

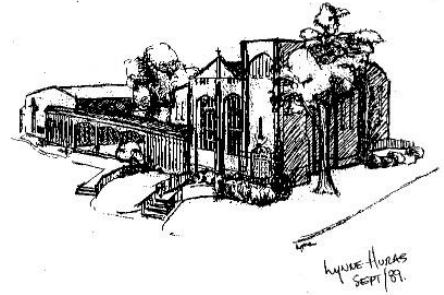
ZION NEWS

NOVEMBER 2025

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



The Communion of Saints

“Rejoice in God’s saints today and all days! A world without saints forgets how to praise.” – ELW Hymn 418.

Among the many pieces of furniture in my office sits a wooden armchair upon which sits my office companion Ted, who is still wearing the uniform of the team that the Blue Jays defeated in the playoffs. The chair is used when I host small meetings in the office but usually sits in my line of sight when I am working at my desk. While the chair is very comfortable and functional, it serves a far more important purpose for me: it is the chair on which my father would sit in our family home whenever we had family or friends visiting. While there were many more plush chairs in the house, my father would always pull out this chair which he felt was more comfortable and gave his back greater support. I have numerous photos of my father sitting in the chair amid a large gathering in our home, and when I was preparing my parent’s home for sale I made certain that this chair would come with me and have an honoured place in my office here at Zion.

This chair has special meaning to me this month because it was on November 12, 1999, that my father suddenly passed away. The anniversary of his death is joined with two other important dates in the eleventh month of the year in which we remember and give thanks for the faithful departed and for *“all the saints who from their labours rest.”* (ELW Hymn 422). On Sunday, November 2, we will remember the saints who have blessed us in our lives and now rest in the loving arms of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who promises us that the day will surely come when *“I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also.”* (John 14:3). On the Sunday closest to All Saints’ Day on November 1, we remember not only the saints who have their names immortalized on churches, schools, and hospitals; we remember the saints in our lives who shared with us the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord, were faithful to the promises they made on the day of our baptisms to place in our hands the Holy Scriptures so that God’s Word might be a source of light and life to us, and became our mentors and role models on living every day as a child of God. They were saints not because they were perfect or lived extraordinary lives; they were saints because they sought to be faithful to God’s call for God’s beloved people to be *“a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”* (1 Peter 2:9).

- “I believe that there is a holy group and a congregation made up only of saints. And you too are in this church: the Holy Spirit leads you into it through the preaching of the gospel ... Through the Christian church, that is, through its ministry, you were sanctified; for the Holy Spirit uses its ministry in order to sanctify you. Otherwise you would never know and hear Christ.” – Martin Luther.

As we remember these holy people on All Saints’ Sunday, this is the month in which our nation also remembers those who gave their lives for the cause of our freedom as Canadians. Remembrance Day is an occasion of great solemnity in which we pause on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month to remember and give thanks for all those who fought and died in wars in which our country fought to defeat forces of darkness and tyranny. We gather with our fellow citizens to lay wreaths, hear the names of those who laid down their lives, and hear the immortal words of John McCrae reminding us of the meaning of the poppies we wear during this season of remembrance:

- “Take up our quarrel with the foe: to you from falling hands we throw the torch; be yours to hold it high. If ye break faith with us who die we shall not sleep, though poppies grow in Flanders fields.”

We are called in the month of November to pause and remember these people upon whose shoulders we stand and who laid the foundation upon which we have built our lives. As those who we commemorate on Remembrance Day gave of themselves so that our nation might be

built on a strong foundation, so have the saints who have gone before us given us the strength and stability on which we may continue to build our lives and the lives of the church which is the communion of saints as the torch of the gospel ministry of Jesus Christ has been passed on to us. As we remember these people and give thanks for their lives and sacrifices, we also pledge to be those saints who will be faithful to the tasks that have been entrusted to us so that we might pass them along to future generations who one day will give thanks for our lives and witness on these days of remembrance.

- “To be a saint is to be human because we were created to be human. To be a saint is to live with courage and self-restraint ... to live not with the hands clenched to grasp, to strike, to hold tight to a life that is always slipping away the more tightly we hold it; but it is to live with hands stretched out both to give and to receive in gladness.” – Frederick Buechner.

The wooden chair in my office serves as a comfortable seat for my guest, but more importantly it serves as a reminder of the solid foundation my father gave me so that I might build my life on his example and be faithful to the task that was passed on to me as a saint in this generation. Every day when I look at this precious artifact from my past, I give thanks for the saint I knew in my father and all the saints who were with me then and who surround me today as all the saints surround us so that we might *“run with perseverance the race that is set before us”* (Hebrews 12:1) as the church of Jesus Christ which is in every generation the communion of saints!

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Jeff Laustsen

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE OCTOBER 15, 2025 CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING

Congregational Council Meeting

The October 15, 2025 Congregational Council Meeting was held in-person in the Parlour.



The two commercial inclined platform lifts at the front entranceway to the church have been ordered and are expected to arrive by the end of October. An installation schedule will be coordinated with us once Estate Elevator takes delivery.

Once the installation has been completed, a Technical Standards & Safety Authority (TSSA) inspection will be required before the lift can be put into operation.

A new quote has been received for the third commercial inclined platform lift from the courtyard to the Fellowship Hall to meet egress requirements. Estate Elevator has kept the updated cost at \$85,000.00 as a result of placing orders for the two inclined platform lifts. This lift is being considered for next year, if funding is available.

A coffee hour was held on Sunday, October 5. Enough volunteers have signed up to look after coffee hour so that we can provide one coffee hour per month right up until June.

Fifty-Six people attended the Seniors' Luncheon on October 10. The next Seniors' Luncheon will be held on November 14, 2025.

Investigations are being made for the possibility of holding another fundraiser in the spring.

The Engineering Department at the City of Stratford have confirmed that the crosswalk at Erie and St. David Street will not be completed this year. The schedule for 2026 has not been prepared as yet, but Erie and St. David Street is near the top of the list.

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



**SUNDAY SCHOOL
NEWS**

On Sunday, November 16th, Susan will be doing an Advent/Christmas craft with the Sunday School.

The Sunday School children will be singing during the 10 AM worship on Sunday, November 30th, 2025.

The Children's Christmas Program will be held on Sunday, December 14th during the 10 AM service.

A reminder to all that we are a **NUT FREE** Sunday School.

Please remember that Sunday School ends at 11:15 AM. We ask that parents/grandparents wait until that time before coming for your children.

Paula McNaughton,
Sunday School Coordinator

“SENIORS’ LUNCHEON REPORT”

The “October” Seniors’ Luncheon was attended by 56 people each enjoying a delicious meal of meatloaf, mashed potatoes, gravy, a vegetable, coleslaw, buns and pie to top it off.

Kelly McIntosh from the Stratford Perth Museum gave an excellent presentation on how women’s roles changed during WWII.

A big “THANK YOU” to our volunteers: Irene Ehgoetz and Donna Wickenheiser who attended to the door; Dianne Mann and her kitchen helpers Laurie Snow, Wendy Hansen, Jan Bennewitz, Carmen Beck and Marilyn Neumeister. Congratulations to all on another successful luncheon! A special “THANK YOU” to Dianne Mann for her lovely table centrepieces!

Below are a couple of pictures which affirms the good time that was had by all.





Kelly McIntosh

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY



Shawl
MINISTRY

The Prayer Shawl Ministry is grateful to the individuals who support us with donations of funds, yarn and knitting at home.

This fall we have distributed crocheted and knitted hats, scarves, mittens, socks, lap blankets, baby blankets, and shawls to Zion members, The House of Blessing, The Connection Centre, Greenwood Court, People Care Tavistock and West Perth Village (Ritz Villa).

The group also contributed over 2300 knitted and crocheted poppies to the ever-growing, Remembrance Day Banners to be displayed on the William Hutt Bridge, near the cenotaph and on main street. Heidi Hohendorf, once again, was prolific and crocheted over 2000.

We are Blessed to Live in Canada!

In gratitude,
Nancy Schaff

WOMEN OF FAITH



The Women of Faith will be meeting in the Church Parlour on **November 29th at 9:30 AM** to package the WE-CARE Christmas Gift Bags. These will be delivered within a week after packaging (November 29th to December 6th).

After packaging the Gift Bags, they will be going to Demetre's Family Eatery at **Noon (November 29th)** to share a Christmas Luncheon together. All ladies of Zion Church are welcome to attend. Please call Darlene (519-271-0996) or Wendy (519-271-4664) by November 24th to confirm you are coming.

SENIORS' LUNCHEON



The next Seniors' Luncheon will be held on **Friday, November 14th from Noon until 2:00 PM.**

Sara McIntyre-Roy will be sharing about the Connection Centre located at St. Paul's Church here in town. She has a wealth of knowledge about the many services offered.

As winter approaches, if you are able to assist in this important ministry, please bring along one (1) or two (2) items to the November luncheon. Individual packets of food (applesauce cups, granola bars, crackers), socks, mittens, hats, etc. are greatly needed and appreciated. Thank you for your generosity.

A reminder to enlighten you on how the process for the Seniors' Luncheon works.

Please remember that if you say that you will attend the luncheon, your name is added to the 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, NOVEMBER 14TH 2025

Starting at 12:00 Noon

202 Erie Street – enter off Erie Street

519-271-8527

Wheelchair accessible

On the Queensland bus route

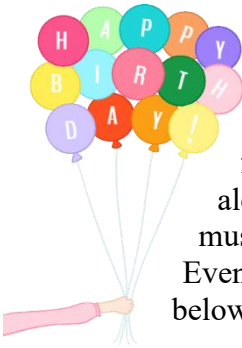
\$20.00

Entertainment: Sara McIntyre-Roy from the Connection Centre

will give a presentation on the many services offered by the
Connection Centre

Worship on Sundays is at 10:00 A.M.
Everyone Welcome!!!

80+ BIRTHDAY PARTY



A Birthday Party for our Seniors 80 years of age and older was held on Friday, October 24th.

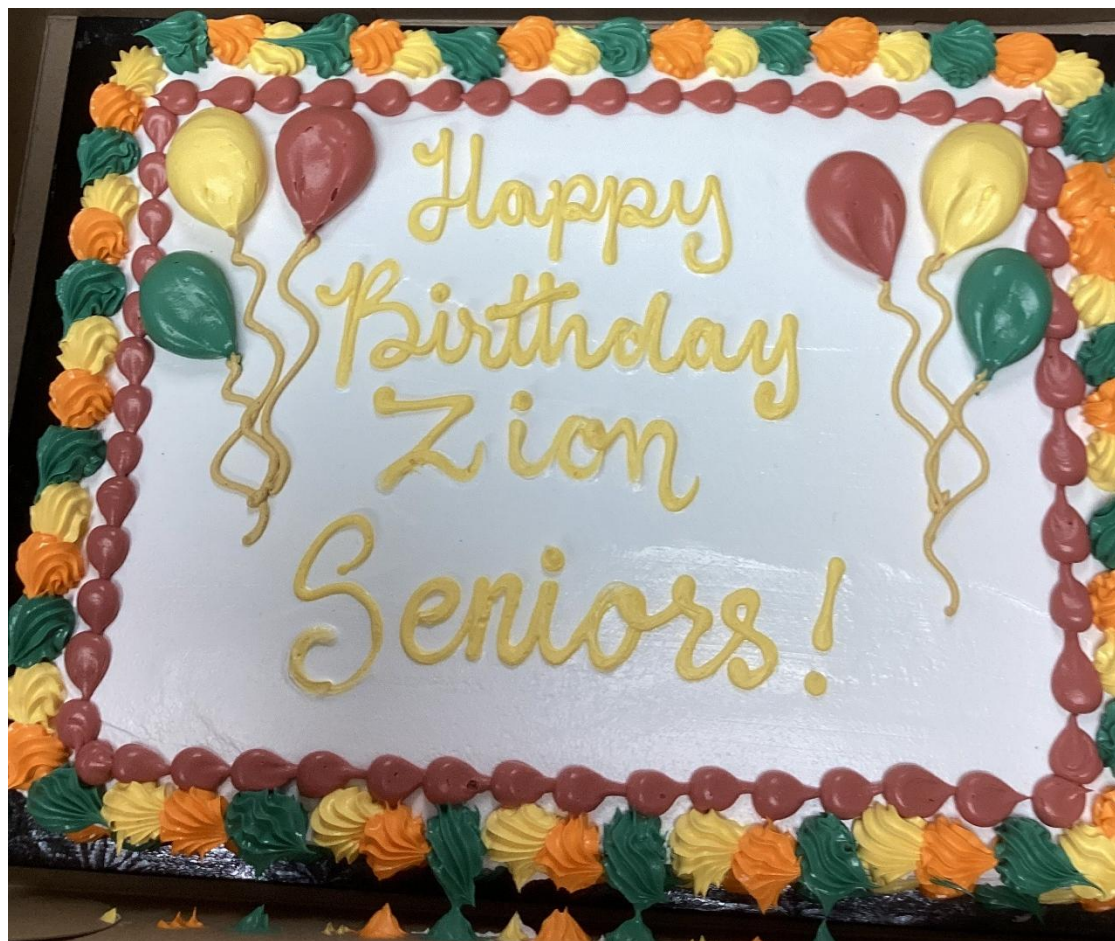
Twenty-eight people were entertained by the “Dynamic Duo” which featured Dianne & Gary. They were excellent playing toe-tapping, sing-along music. I did witness a cane thumping on the floor to the beat of the music, hands slapping legs, heads popping and voices singing the words. Even Elvis joined the party for a short time as you can see in the picture below.

Following the entertainment everyone moved over to the tables and chairs to enjoy a piece of birthday cake topped off with ice cream and a coffee, tea or water.

A “SPECIAL THANK YOU” to Dianne Mann for doing a GREAT job decorating in a “Fall” theme.

A “BIG THANK YOU” also goes out to Mary-Lou Drown for her organizing of the party; Bob & Marilyn Wells for acting as greeters and assisting with walkers, wheel chairs, etc.; Janet Ahrens at the registration table; kitchen helpers Irene Ehgoets, Marie Ehgoetz, Jan Bennewitz, Carmen Beck and Laurie Snow.

We want to wish all our Seniors 80 and over a belated “Happy Birthday” and we can’t wait until the birthday party next year!





STRATFORD CONNECTION CENTRE

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



**Volunteers for
Tuesday, Thursday, Friday**

**Razors
Toothbrushes
Basic t-shirts (medium)
Ground coffee
Packaged grab & go snacks!
Deodorant**



Please Note: Due to limited space, Stratford Connection Centre is not able to accept donations of clothing. If you have clothing to donate, please take it to Goodwill as this is where Stratford Connection takes their homeless for clothing.

HOWEVER, donations of socks, underwear, hats, scarves and mittens (preferably water proof mittens) are needed and accepted at Stratford Connection. Thank you!

**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!

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

Date	Greeters	Readers	Usher Captains	Altar Guild	Counting Captains
November 2 “ALL SAINTS’ DAY”	Janet & Gerry Ahrens	Stephen Fischer	Brian Coe	Ellen Wolfe	Laurie Snow
November 9	Tom & Joanne Cosstick	Fritz Steigmeier	Tom Cosstick	Carmen Beck	Laurie Snow
November 16	Wayne & Linda Faulhafer	Linda Faulhafer	Darrell Reneckert	Sister Jean	Irene West
November 23	Audrey Miller) Mervyn Dietz)	Glenn Rittinger	Brian Coe	Shirley Whittaker	Irene West
November 30	Ron & Nancy Hesas	Mary-Lou Drown	Darrell Renecker	Ellen Wolfe	Carmen Beck



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

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