



FOURTH SUNDAY OF
ADVENT

December 21, 2025

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

Stratford, Ontario

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People of Zion

Rev. Jeffrey Laustsen

Sister Jean Widmeyer

Stéphane Potvin

Laura Burton

Éric Charbonneau

Ministers

Pastor

Visitation Minister

Minister of Music

Organist

Pianist

Advent 4

December 21, 2025

GATHERING

Prelude

Welcome, Announcements

Confession and Forgiveness

Page 116

Hymn 257: “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

Verses 1-4, 6

Greeting

Page 120

Prayer of the Day:

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

WORD

First Reading: Isaiah 7:10-16

Psalm: 80:1-7, 17-19

Second Reading: Romans 1:1-7

Gospel Acclamation

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Gospel: Matthew 1:18-25

Sermon: https://www.youtube.com/live/Kip_-0hhQ7w?si=7XIJHC37p0U5Szt7

Hymn 265: “The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came”

Nicene Creed	Page 126
Prayers of Intercession	
Sharing the Peace	Page 128
Choir Anthem: “Saviour of the Nations, Come”	

MEAL

Offering Hymn 186: “Create in Me a Clean Heart”

Offering Prayer	Page 129
The Great Thanksgiving	Page 129
Communion Prayer	Page 132
The Lord’s Prayer	Page 134

Distribution of Holy Communion

Distribution Hymns: 250, 251

SENDING

Post-Communion Blessing	Page 136
Post-Communion Prayer	
Blessing	Page 136
Hymn 267: “Joy to the World”	
Dismissal	Page 137
Postlude	

Zion Lutheran Church welcomes our **visitors and guests**. We are pleased that you have come to join us in the worship of our God of grace and love. May you be strengthened and uplifted in our time together. *Please sign our guest register and make yourself known to Pastor Jeff.* We hope that you will plan to be with us, again, at your earliest opportunity.

All people of faith and those who seek faith are welcome to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion. This morning, we will be distributing the Lord’s Supper in a continuous fashion. Trays holding individual cups of wine are on stands at either side of Pastor Jeff for those wishing to receive wine. **We are making available a small number of individual glasses filled with non-alcoholic white wine. These are for those not wishing to partake in the red wine containing alcohol.** The ushers will invite the congregation to come forward down the center aisle.

Please note that masks are now “optional or personal preference”. Disposable masks remain at all entrances for those wishing to continue to wear one.





Wednesday, December 24	4:00 PM	Christmas Eve
Wednesday, December 24	7:00 PM	Christmas Eve
Thursday, December 25	10:00 AM	Christmas Day

THIS WEEK WE PRAY:

>for our members and friends with special needs: Jim, Wayne, Doris, Matthew, Marjorie, Bill, Marie, Jamie, Marleen, Nancy, Gwen, Jim, Jack, Diane, Gloria, Kathleen, Tony, Paul, Wendy, Joan, Devon, Hollice, Joyce, Maria, Tom, Marian, Leanne, Isabelle, Al, Brian, Paul, Nya, and Cathy;
>for those who have no one to pray for them.

THIS WEEK AT ZION:

Mon. December 22 6:00-8:00 PM Girl Guides in Parlour
7:15 pm Choir in Chapel

Wed. December 24 * CHRISTMAS EVE *
4:00 PM Worship
7:00 PM Worship

Thurs. December 25 * CHRISTMAS DAY * (OFFICE CLOSED)
10:00 AM Worship

Sun. December 28 * CHRISTMAS 1*
10:00 AM Worship

SERVING CHRISTMAS EVE, DECEMBER 24TH AT 4:00 PM AS WE WORSHIP

Greeters: Liz Bomasuit

Usher Captain: VOLUNTEER NEEDED

Altar: VOLUNTEER NEEDED

Reader: VOLUNTEER NEEDED

Counting Captain: NO COUNTERS

House of Blessing: NO DELIVERY

SERVING CHRISTMAS EVE, DECEMBER 24TH AT 7:00 PM AS WE WORSHIP

Greeters: Karen McLeod & Garrett Bessey

Usher Captain: VOLUNTEER NEEDED

Altar: VOLUNTEER NEEDED

Reader: Glenn Rittinger

Counting Captain: NO COUNTERS

House of Blessing: NO DELIVERY

SERVING CHRISTMAS DAY, DECEMBER 25TH AT 10:00 AM AS WE WORSHIP

Greeters: Ellen Wolfe

Usher Captain: Ellen Wolfe

Altar: Ellen Wolfe

Reader: Brian Wilker

Counting Captain: NO COUNTERS

House of Blessing: NO DELIVERY

SERVING SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28TH AT 10:00 AM AS WE WORSHIP

Greeters: Paul & Janet Jeffery

Usher Captain: Brian Coe

Altar: Sister Jean

Reader: Aline Kouhi-Klemencic

Counting Captain: NO COUNTERS

House of Blessing: NO DELIVERY



ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELCOME: This morning, we welcome Stéphane Potvin as our interim Minister of Music. We are thankful that Stéphane is joining us in our worship and music ministry at Zion during this joyful season as we celebrate the birth of our Saviour and look forward to working with him in the new year.

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS:

THERE IS NO SUNDAY SCHOOL TODAY

Sunday School is on a break until January 11th, 2026

FLOWERS FOR CHRISTMAS:



Donations are now being accepted until the middle of December so the Women of Faith can purchase flowers to decorate the church for our Christmas celebrations. If you wish to donate, please put **“Christmas Flowers” and your name on a separate envelope** and place it on an offering plate located at the back of the Sanctuary or at the ramp entrance; drop it off in the locked mailbox, or bring it to the church office. Thank you for your gift!

CHRISTMAS OFFERING: As in the past, the “Christmas” offering envelopes for this year will be apportioned one-half to the Kiwanis Christmas Basket Fund and one-half to the Current Fund.

“Christmas” offering envelopes are available on the tables at all entrances to the Sanctuary.

“Thank you” for your continued support!

YEAR-END OFFERING DEADLINE: Please note that all 2025 offerings need to be received by December 31st in order to be included on your 2025 tax receipt.

“Thank you” for everyone’s continued financial support.

2026 OFFERING ENVELOPES are available for pickup on the table at the back of the church. If you wish to pick up your envelopes from the office, you can pick them up just inside the doors off the side parking lot. The office is open Mondays from 8:30 am to 11:30 am and Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 8:00 am to 1:00 p.m.

Please DO NOT use your 2026 envelopes until January, 2026. Please call Jane in the office 519-271-8527 if you cannot find your offering envelopes or if you wish to start receiving them for weekly offerings. You may also contact the office if you wish to switch to PAR, the pre-authorized offering program. Thank you!

ETERNITY FOR TODAY: It's that time of year to renew your Eternity For Today subscription. If you are interested in renewing or if you want to register to receive this daily reflection book, please contact Jane in the office at 519-271-8527.

GIFTS FROM THE HEART: Gifts from the Heart 2025 Christmas Catalogues are here and have been placed at each of the entrances. Give Gifts from the Heart this Christmas! Canadian Lutheran World Relief's new Gifts from the Heart catalogue has something to inspire and delight anyone on your list this year. It's full of meaningful, tangible gifts that will touch your loved ones and share God's love with the world. The "Tiny Hearts" section is a good way to introduce children to helping others less fortunate. You can shop from the catalogue or online at clwr.org/GFTH.

LONGEST NIGHT: A reflective and spacious worship service on the longest night of the year for you to come and find your place in the love, compassion and presence of God.

In a season filled with expectation, anticipation and tradition, it can be hard to live it all when weariness, grief or anxiety feels all too close. To honour it and make space for the shadow side of this time, you are invited to take this opportunity to come together. If you wish, bring a friend along. This evening, **Sunday, December 21st at 7:00 PM at Avondale United Church, 194 Avondale Ave., Stratford.**

Stay as long as you wish and leave in thoughtful silence when you are ready.

FREE COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS EVE DINNER: Avon Church is hosting a **free community Christmas Eve Dinner at The Local (612 Erie Street) on December 24th from 4:30 – 6:00 PM.** Everyone is welcome to attend!



PLEASE NOTE: Stratford House of Blessing is **CLOSED** between Christmas and New Year's.

STRATFORD CONNECTION CENTRE: The "urgent needs" list includes razors, toothbrushes, basic t-shirts (medium), ground coffee, packaged grab & go snacks and deodorant. Whatever help you can provide is greatly appreciated!

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 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!

