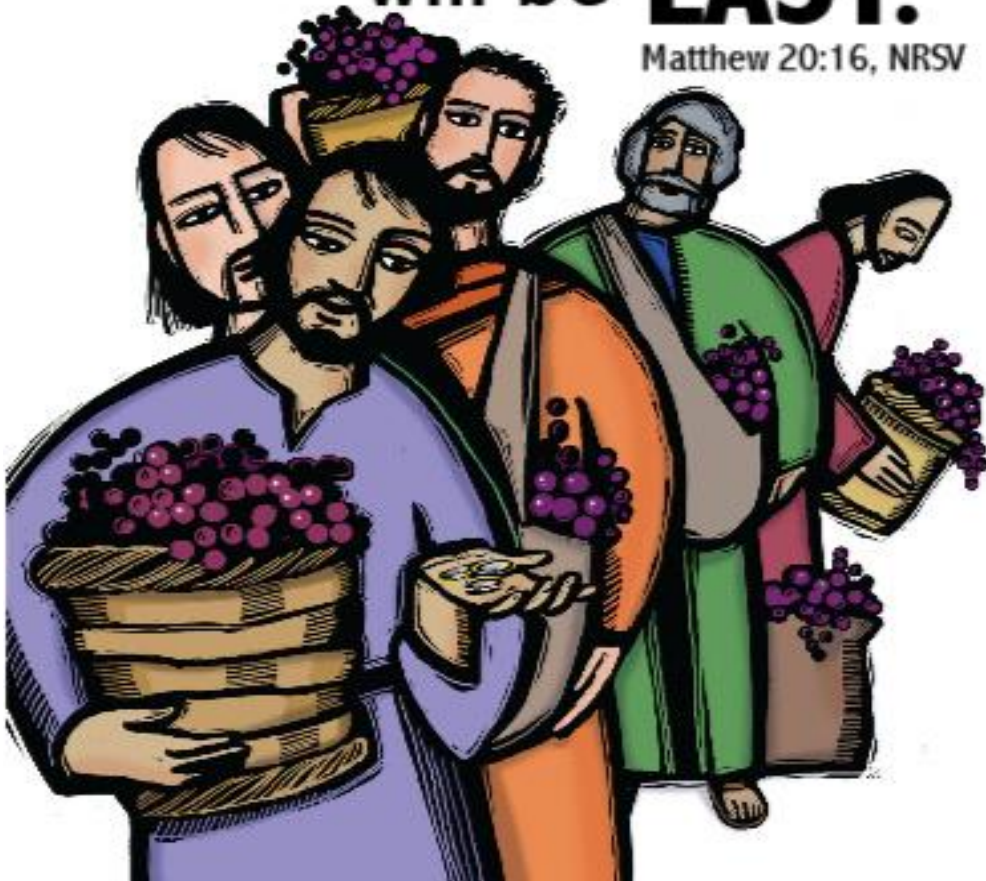


So the **last**
will be **FIRST**,
and the **first**
will be **LAST**.

Matthew 20:16, NRSV



September 20, 2026

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

Stratford, Ontario

Church Office: 519-271-8527

Email: zionlc@golden.net

Cell: 519-274-1300

Website: www.zionstratford.com

People of Zion

Rev. Jeffrey Laustsen

Sister Jean Widmeyer

Stéphane Potvin

Laura Burton

Éric Charbonneau

Ministers

Pastor

Visitation Minister

Minister of Music

Organist

Pianist

Seventeenth Sunday After Pentecost

September 20, 2026

GATHERING

Prelude

Welcome, Announcements

Confession and Forgiveness

Page 116

Hymn 575: “In Christ Called to Baptize”

Greeting

Prayer of the Day:

**Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual lovingkindness to us your servants.
Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgment, and
train us to embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord.
Amen.**

WORD

First Reading: Jonah 3:10-4:11

Psalm: 145:1-8

Second Reading: Philippians 1:21-30

Gospel Acclamation

Page 124

Gospel: Matthew 20:1-16

Children’s Message

Sermon: <https://www.youtube.com/live/m53K93chyLQ?si=G2zLoZanBHwwSBlw>

Hymn 443: “Dearest Jesus, We Are Here”

Holy Baptism Page 227

Prayers of Intercession

Sharing the Peace Page 128

Choir Anthem: “Prayer of St. Richard” White

MEAL

Offering Hymn 182: “Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful”

Offering Prayer Page 129

The Great Thanksgiving Page 129

Communion Prayer Page 130

The Lord’s Prayer Page 134

Distribution of Holy Communion

Distribution Hymns: 454, 659

SENDING

Post-Communion Blessing Page 136

Post-Communion Prayer Page 136

Blessing Page 136

Hymn 458: “Praise and Thanksgiving Be to God”

Dismissal Page 137

Postlude: “Praise God , From Whom All Blessings Flow”

arranged by Johann Christoph Bach

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, which may be found in the inner circle in each communion tray. 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.

THIS WEEK WE PRAY:

>for our members and friends with special needs: Jean, Edith, Heather, Beth, Liz, Peter, Isabelle, David, Carol, Bev, Jim, Wayne, Marjorie, Jamie, Marleen, Nancy, Gwen, Diane, Gloria, Kathleen, Tony, Wendy, Hollice, Leanne, Al, Brian, Nya, and Cathy;
>for those who have no one to pray for them.

THIS WEEK AT ZION:

<u>Mon. Sept. 21</u>	9:30 AM WOF Meeting in Parlour 2:00 PM Prayer Shawl in Parlour 6:30-8:30 PM SSYO in Fellowship Hall 7:00 PM Choir in Chapel
<u>Tues. Sept. 22</u>	7:00 AM Rotary in Fellowship Hall 9:30 AM Chair Yoga in Fellowship Hall 7:00 PM Endowment Meeting in Parlour
<u>Wed. Sept. 23</u>	9:00 AM Quilters in Parlour 7:00 PM Congregational Council Meeting in Parlour
<u>Thurs. Sept. 24</u>	12:00 Noon Bible Study in Parlour 2:15 PM Knollcrest Worship 6:30-8:00 PM Girl Guides in Girl Guide Room
<u>Fri. Sept. 25</u>	9:00 AM WOF making sandwiches in Kitchen
<u>Sun. Sept. 27</u>	* PENTECOST 18 * 10:00 AM Worship 10:00 AM Sunday School

SERVING NEXT SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27TH AS WE WORSHIP

Greeters: Ellen Wolfe / Carmen Beck
Usher Captain: Brian Coe
Altar: Sister Jean

Reader: Carmen Beck
Counting Captain: Ron Hesas
House of Blessing: Janet & Gerry Ahrens



ANNOUNCEMENTS



BAPTISM: This morning we are pleased to welcome a new member to our Zion family through the sacrament of Baptism:

JACOB ANTHONY IVEN

Son of: Michael Iven and Pauline Ruth nee Klemencic

Congratulations to the Iven and Klemencic families!

WOMEN OF FAITH MEETING

The next meeting of the Women of Faith will be tomorrow, **Monday, September 21st at 9:30 AM in the Parlour**

They will be discussing the Christmas Gift bags they prepare for special Seniors in December.

All Zion ladies are welcome to attend!

DECORATING FOR THANKSGIVING: Thanksgiving will be observed at Zion on Sunday, October 11th. It is good to give thanks to our God for the abundant mercies God showers upon us. We are asking the congregation to help supply items to help with our decorating the sanctuary for this occasion. Items sought include fruits and vegetables, end of the year garden produce, or other non-perishable food items. After Thanksgiving these items will be donated to either the House of Blessing or The Local, as appropriate.

Donations may be brought to Zion the week of October 5th, but before Friday, October 9th.

Your donations to this project are appreciated.



E-TRANSFER OFFERINGS:

We are officially setup, once again, for “e-Transfer auto deposits”.

However, we have had to create a new email address for our e-Transfers that is linked directly to our CIBC account.

For future e-Transfers please use zion202offerings@execulink.com.

A security question will not be required using this email address and funds will be automatically deposited to our account.

We want to “thank you” for your patience and understanding during the process to remedy the auto deposit procedure.



SUNDAY SCHOOL REGISTRATION FOR SEPTEMBER 2026

It's not too late!

Parents/Grandparents: Have you registered your Child(ren) or Grandchild(ren) for Sunday School? Registering them is not a commitment for having them here every Sunday. By registering them, it 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 2026 right through to 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 name(s), current grade(s) as of September 2026. You may email the information to our new Sunday School Co-ordinator, Kyla Cook-Montgomery, at zionluth.sscoord@outlook.com.

All children/grandchildren of members need to be registered to attend Sunday School. Any visiting families with children 4 years of age in 2026 right through to Grade 6 are welcome without registering.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you for your assistance and co-operation.

STRATFORD SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: Presents *Enchanted Landscapes: Weber, Reinecke & Schumann*

Saturday, September 26th at 7:30 PM
Avondale United Church – 194 Avondale Ave.

Conductor: William Rowson

For more information and tickets visit www.stratfordsymphony.ca

ZION'S 80 & OVER SENIORS' BIRTHDAY PARTY is being held in the Fellowship Hall on **Friday, October 23rd, 2026 from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM. Personal invitation calls will be coming soon.**

INTRODUCING CAREGIVER CONNECTION SUPPORT FOR THOSE WHO CARE FOR OTHERS

The following information comes from the Rotary Hospice Stratford Perth Newsletter.

When someone in your circle is living with a serious illness, you may find yourself taking on new responsibilities such as helping with appointments and medications, preparing meals, providing personal care, offering emotional support, or simply being there when they need you most. You might not think of yourself as a *caregiver*. You may simply think, “I’m their spouse,” “I’m their daughter,” “I’m their friend.”

But if you’re caring for someone, in any capacity, you are a caregiver.

We’re excited to introduce [Caregiver Connection](#), a new free program starting in a few weeks, designed to support people who are caring for a loved one.

Through education, conversation, and peer connection, caregivers will have an opportunity to learn practical strategies, share experiences with others who understand and take some time for themselves.

Caregiving can be rewarding, but it can also be challenging, isolating, and exhausting. You don’t have to navigate it alone.

Whether you proudly identify as a caregiver or have never used that word to describe yourself, this program is for you. Please share this information with anyone in your circle who may benefit.

To learn more, click the button below or contact referrals@rotaryhospice.ca

[COME SEE OUR SERENITY GARDEN!](#)

Next month, Rotary Hospice Stratford Perth is celebrating the completion of their [Serenity Garden](#), a beautiful outdoor space created to offer peace, comfort and connection at Rotary Hospice.

The garden is already open to their residents, families, visitors and the wider community, providing a quiet place to sit, spend time together, reflect, or simply enjoy a little fresh air surrounded by the beauty of nature.

Before winter arrives, they are inviting you to join them for a special **Serenity Garden Open House** to celebrate this meaningful addition to their hospice grounds and the many hands and hearts that helped make it possible.

Date: Thursday, October 8th

Time: Drop in anytime between 5 - 7 pm

Location: The Serenity Garden behind Rotary Hospice, 80 Greenwood Dr. (located on the hospice grounds closest to Norwood Court). **Please consider parking on Norwood Court, as parking in the hospice parking lot is limited and prioritized for family members and loved ones of residents.*

Details: This is a rain-or-shine drop-in event; light beverages will be served, with live music provided by Our Little Band at 5 pm and formal remarks at 6 pm.

Come for a little while, stay for the music and remarks if you wish, or simply stop by to see the garden and share in the celebration.

P.S. While dogs are welcome to visit the Serenity Garden, we would ask that they be left at home for this special event.

STRATFORD CONNECTION CENTRE: Below is an updated “Needs List”:

- Single serve snacks
- Basic socks
- Laundry soap/pods
- Coffee & sugar (always)
- Bus tickets
- Toothpaste, toothbrushes
- Razors

Donations are accepted Monday-Friday between 12:00 PM-4:30 PM.

Please contact them if an alternative drop off time is necessary at 519-271-6819 ext 405 or by email connectioncentre@cmhahuronperth.com.

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

Thank you for continuing to support the Connection Centre so they can support our vulnerable neighbours! ❤️



FALL FOOD DRIVE: The House of Blessing Thanksgiving Food Drive is next Saturday, **September 26**, and they would love your help!

They will be at **Food Basics, No Frills, and Zehrs**, greeting shoppers, handing out flyers, accepting donations and sorting food. They will also need some extra hands afterward to help unload everything back at the Food Bank.

Come for the morning, afternoon, or both. Bring your **friends, family, coworkers, sports team, church group or organization** and spend a few hours helping make a difference.

This is also a great opportunity for **high school students looking to complete their volunteer hours**, or for families who want to volunteer together.

To sign up, email volunteer@shob.org. Mark your calendars:

HOUSE OF BLESSING “RIDE FOR REFUGE”: Join the Ride for Refuge, a family-friendly fundraising ride and walk supporting Stratford House of Blessing Food Bank. Every step and every kilometre helps provide food and hope for neighbours in our community facing food insecurity.

Saturday, October 3

For more information, to sign up, volunteer or donate visit rideforrefuge.org/stratford

We have received a “most-needed items list” from the House of Blessing. To help them with their significant increase in the number of people using their services, as you are able, if you could bring **Baked beans or Rice** and place them in the basket at the entrance of the church. Thank you for sharing your blessings with those in need.



The Bulletin Board located in the Courtyard
Featuring Pastor Jeff's Confirmation Verse

Do you remember your Confirmation Verse?

Would you like to share it?

If so, please call the office 519-271-8527.



THE LORD IS
GRACIOUS
AND
Merciful
SLOW to *ANGER*
AND **ABOUNDING IN**
Steadfast
Love.

Psalm 145:8, ESV