

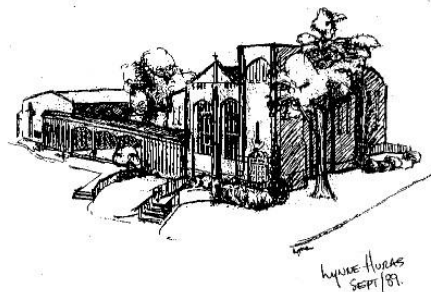
ZION NEWS

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2026

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

"How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey in my mouth!" – Psalm 119:103.



Anyone who has stopped by my office has noticed that I have collected a lot of books through the years. You might say it is an occupational hazard for pastors; many of my colleagues have similar collections of books that they have amassed throughout their ministries. There are a wide variety of books on my shelves: worship books, Bible commentaries, books on Lutheran and church history, collections of prayers and devotionals, and works by my favourite authors. Some of these books have been in my possession since seminary, while others are more recent acquisitions. Some books I take off the shelf on a regular basis; others I may not touch for months, but I know that if I give away any of them, I will be looking for them the next week. The books on my shelves are the tools of my ministry, as valuable to me as a hammer or a socket wrench in the hands of a carpenter or mechanic.

Of all the books that I have collected and used over the years, the most important and valuable, of course, is the Holy Bible, what we Lutherans believe is *"the inspired Word of God and the only source and norm of the church's life and work"* (ELCIC Constitution). We believe that the Bible is the means through which the Word of God is proclaimed to us today as it was proclaimed when these books were first written. As God's Word has been *"a lamp to my feet and a light to my path"* (Psalm 119:105), we believe that God continues to speak to us through this Holy Word, a Word that is *"Living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow. It is able to judge the thoughts"*

and intentions of the heart.” (Hebrews 4:12). The Word of God is at the center of our worship life and guides us as we seek to be faithful disciples who hear God’s Word and seek to live in accordance with God’s Will.

While the Bible is the most important book in the lives of Christians, it is in reality a collection of sixty-six books that were written over the course of many centuries. One of the tools I use when I am teaching the Bible is a diagram of the Holy Word as a collection of books on shelves; these books are divided into the two shelves of the Old and New Testaments and categorized according to the type of messages they contain. On the Old Testament shelf, we have the books of the Torah, books of history, books of wisdom such as the Psalms and Proverbs, and the books of prophets who proclaimed the word of God to the people of Israel. On the New Testament shelf we have the Gospels, the history book known as the Acts of the Apostles, the letters of St. Paul as well as the general epistles, and the apocalyptic book of Revelation. The diversity of these books offers us many important lessons that God proclaimed to God’s people in ancient times, lessons that also have great importance for us today. As Paul proclaimed to Timothy, *“All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.”* (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

As the schools in our community are preparing to begin a new year of learning, the learning ministries of our congregation will begin another year of teaching our children and all members the lessons that we continue to receive through God’s Holy Word. On Sunday, September 13, we will begin another year of Sunday school with our Rally Sunday celebration, pledging ourselves to be faithful to the promise we make when we welcome children into the Lord’s family through Holy Baptism to *“teach them the Lord’s Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments, place in their hands the holy scriptures, and nurture them in faith and prayer”* (ELW Holy Baptism). This learning ministry continues for our children who move on from Sunday into our Confirmation program in which we teach what it means to be a Christian in preparing them for affirming their baptismal promises as they promise to *“live among God’s faithful people, hear the word of God and share in the Lord’s supper, proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed, serve all people, following the example of Jesus, and strive for justice and peace in all the earth.”* (ELW Affirmation of Baptism). Because our baptismal calling continues through all the days of our lives, we will gather again in our Thursday Bible Study class to study God’s Word and what it means for us in all the seasons of our lives. We open our ears and our hearts to hear God’s Word so that it might bless us with the simple but profound good news that *“Jesus loves me, this I know – for the Bible tells me so!”*

- “The Bible tells us stories we need and want to hear – stories to help us live, stories to help us die, and stories to help us believe we shall live again. Listening to them, we

are called into relationship with the One who tells them to us. Believing them, we are changed. The living words of God heal our hurts and soften our hearts; they clear our vision and guide our feet. Like a lifeline strung from the beginning of time to the end, they show us a way through all the storms of culture, nature, and history. They show us the way to the Word beyond all our words, in whose presence we shall be made eloquent at last.” – Barbara Brown Taylor.

The books on my office shelves are quite an impressive collection that will probably continue to keep growing, but I know that they are of no value unless I take them off the shelves and use them for their intended purpose. The books that are collected on the “shelves” of the Holy Bible are books that proclaim the message of light and life that are ours in the one who is the Word of God Incarnate, our Lord Jesus Christ. As the people of God to whom our Lord speaks through this Holy Word, may we dedicate ourselves to focusing on the Word of God that is *“our great heritage and shall be ours forever; to spread its light from age to age shall be our chief endeavor. Through life it guides our way; in the death it is our stay. Lord, grant while time shall last your church may hold it fast throughout all generations.”* (ELW Hymn 509).

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Jeff Laustsen

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE JUNE 17, 2026 CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING



The June 17, 2026 Congregational Council Meeting was held in-person in the Parlour and by Zoom.

The AED Training took place on Wednesday, June 10, 2026. There was a good representation from staff, ushers and committee members.

The Weber Family Concert was held on Sunday, May 31, 2026. Although the attendance was not what we had hoped for as far as a fundraising concert, for those who did attend, they thoroughly enjoyed the concert. Due to the efforts of the Congregational Life Committee members, we did realize an overall profit of approximately \$1,000.00.

It was approved that we continue with Stéphane Potvin's Agreement over the summer months. He will be cataloging as well as digitalizing the music in our extensive library.

As far as the repaving of the Paved Parking lot surrounding the church building, a motion was made via email to accept the recommendation of the Property Committee to proceed with the quote as received from Steve Smith Construction in the amount of \$70,625.00 plus H.S.T., after discussing how to fund this capital project, the following motion was made to accept the joint recommendations of the Endowment Fund Committee and the Finance Committee – that we take funds from the Special Reserve Fund in the amount of \$50,000.00 and \$23,408.00 from the Memorial Fund and no more than up to \$25,000.00 excess from Reserve and that we have a Special Congregational Meeting to formally approve the funding of the repaving of the Paved Parking lot surrounding the church building and that the meeting be held on Sunday, July 12th. It is to be noted that the funding motion was formally approved at the Special Congregational Meeting.

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.

BIBLE STUDY

Bible Study Class Returns on Thursday, September 10



"Is that really in the Bible?!"

The Bible is, of course, the most important book for Christians, the book through which we believe God speaks to us as God has spoken to every generation of disciples. Our Bible is a diverse collection of sixty-six books, and some of these books have caused a great deal of confusion and controversy over the years. Some church leaders (including Martin Luther) even sought to have some of these books taken out of the Bible because of their controversial nature. Yet they remain in our Holy Scriptures, even though some of what they contain may come as a surprise and shock to modern readers.

As we resume our Thursday Bible Study classes on Thursday, September 10 at 12:00 noon, we will be exploring these **Controversial Books of the Bible**. Our study will include an exploration of several of the most notorious books of Scripture as well as other passages that have sparked debate over the centuries:

- **Esther.** One of two biblical books named after a woman (along with Ruth), Esther tells the story of a woman who defeated the attempts of an evil Persian official to

eliminate the people of Israel. It is the basis for the Jewish festival of Purim, but Martin Luther once said he wished the book “did not exist at all,” in part because God is never mentioned once in the entire book.

- **Ecclesiastes.** A book of wisdom literature credited to a writer named the Preacher (Qoheleth), the book has been called “the strangest book of the Bible.” It is famous for its third chapter which was immortalized in the song “Turn, Turn, Turn,” but it is also notorious for such verses as “*vanity of vanities ... all is vanity.*”
- **Song of Solomon.** A collection of love poetry celebrating the joys of romantic love. Some Bible scholars have attempted to allegorize these poems as speaking of God’s love for God’s people, the book is similar to Esther in that it never mentions God or religious practices and speaks of romantic love in often explicit imagery.
- **Ezekiel.** One of the Major Prophets of the Old Testament, Ezekiel is one of the most controversial and debated books in the Bible, facing scrutiny for its Torah contradictions, mystical restrictions, and graphic imagery.
- **James.** One of the General Epistles of the New Testament, Luther dismissed this work as an “epistle of straw,” in part because of its emphasis on works in the life of a Christian.
- **Revelation.** The most notorious and misunderstood book of the Bible, Luther felt it should be taken out of the Bible, questioning the apostolic authorship of the book and noting that it was too obscure and contained nothing of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Our class sessions promise to be engaging and enlightening as we study these books that have caused so much controversy and yet remain a part of the book we consider to be the holy Word of God. Join us in this exploration of these surprising aspects of our Scriptures!

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Jeff Laustsen

CONFIRMATION

Confirmation Classes Beginning on Thursday, October 1



Confirmation Class

Anyone who has walked through the hallways of our buildings has noticed how important Confirmation has been in the life of our congregation, as the walls are lined with the photos of Confirmation classes at Zion dated back to 1926. Confirmation is a central aspect of many Lutheran congregations (as well as many other Christian denominations), the occasion when young people affirm their baptismal promises and are given the blessing of the laying on of hands as we pray that they will be empowered by the gift of the Holy Spirit in their lives and faith. Confirmation is a celebration for families as well as the family of the Church, a day many of us remember and cherish all of our lives.

We are beginning a new Confirmation Class to prepare our young people for this milestone in their lives this October. Our new Confirmation Class will meet on Thursdays at 4:15 pm beginning on Thursday, October 1. Our focus will be on the central question in Martin Luther's *Small Catechism*: ***"What Does This Mean?"*** Through our study and discussions that focus on both the Bible and the Catechism, we will explore both what Lutheran Christians believe and teach and what our faith means in our daily lives. These classes will help prepare our students for the day of their Confirmation as well as their lives as God's people.

For more information or to register for these classes, please contact Pastor Jeff at the church office or at laustsen311@gmail.com. May God bless our young people as they consider what it means to live and serve as a baptized child of God.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Jeff Laustsen

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

Sunday School returns on Rally Sunday, September 13th.

SUNDAY SCHOOL REGISTRATION FOR SEPTEMBER 2026



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 2026 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 name(s), current grade(s) as of September 2026. You may email the information to:

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 are welcome without registering.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you for your assistance and co-operation.

Kayla Cook-Montgomery
Sunday School Coordinator

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY



In this fast-paced world the benefits of knitting and crocheting are being noted. It is a creative learning opportunity helpful to our brain as learning a new skill enhances cognitive function. The methodic repetition of simple stitches with yarn and needles is shown to be meditative. At the same time, it is a purposeful activity resulting in something useful to be given to another person. It fosters a sense of accomplishment!

Please come and check out the Prayer Shawl group.

We meet Monday afternoons 2:00 to 4:00 PM in the Parlour.

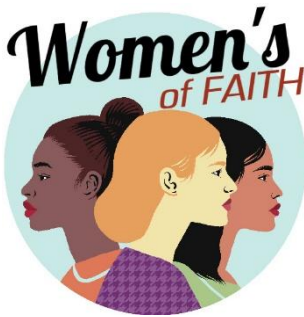
No knitting or crocheting experience is required; we will teach and support you.

There are refreshments and fellowship during our time together as you create items of comfort.

We welcome you to join us!

Prayer Shawl Minister Member
Nancy Schaff

WOMEN OF FAITH



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

We will be discussing the Christmas Gift bags we prepare for special Seniors in December.

All Zion ladies are welcome to attend!

SENIORS' LUNCHEON

SAVE THE DATES



Following a well-deserved break for the summer, everyone involved with the Seniors' Luncheons is thrilled to announce that the Seniors' Luncheons are returning with the first one booked for **Friday, September 11th**. Your caller will, once again, be giving you a call personally inviting you to enjoy another delicious meal and entertainment. At this time, I am not sure what the meal will be, but I have been told that the entertainment on September 11th will be **Sue & Mike Weber**. Sue and her band performed a concert here at Zion at the end of May and their old-fashioned country music was excellent. We hope to see you there!

The October Seniors' Luncheon will be held on **Friday, October 9th**. Again, at this time I am not aware of what the meal will consist of; but, Mary-Lou and Janet have arranged for Cheri Gilhula to speak on the important work done by the VON. You can count on the meal being delicious and the entertainment enlightening.

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 & Friends of Zion Lutheran Church

Invite you to Zion's next

SENIOR LUNCHEONS

Friday, September 11th

Friday, October 9th

Starting at 12:00 Noon

202 Erie Street - enter off Erie Street

519-271-8527

Wheelchair accessible

On the Queensland Bus Route

\$20.00

Worship on Sunday is at 10:00 A.M.

Everyone Welcome!



STRATFORD CONNECTION CENTRE

The Stratford Connection Centre (located at 9 Douro Street inside St. Paul's Anglican Church) is currently facing critically low donation levels and is in urgent need of grab-and-go food items, drinks, transit support, and select basic-needs supplies. [[1](#), [2](#), [3](#)]

Current Urgent Needs

- Grab-and-go snacks (granola bars, trail mix, cookies, cheese and crackers, fruit cups)
- Drinks (bottled water, juice boxes, Gatorade/electrolyte drinks)
- Transit tickets (local bus tickets)
- New socks and underwear
- Lightly used footwear
- Outerwear (rain jackets, baseball caps)
- Personal hygiene and basic care items (hairbrushes, hygiene wipes) [[1](#), [2](#)]

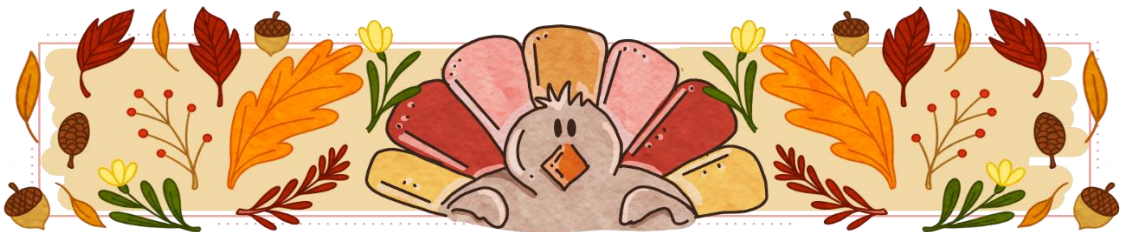
Donation Guidelines

- Please note that the centre **cannot accept** general clothing donations outside of specific seasonal/outerwear needs, new undergarments, and footwear.
- Items must be clean and in good, usable condition (no rips, stains, or heavy wear).
- It is strongly recommended to call ahead at **(519) 271-6819 ext. 405** or contact United Way Perth-Huron to coordinate drop-off times

For convenience, you may drop off donations here at Zion in the bins located at the back of the Sanctuary or inside the office entrance door.

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

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!





September



Date	Greeters	Readers	Usher Captains	Altar Guild	Counting Captains
September 6	Gerald & Isabel Cook	Aline Kouhi-Klemencic	Jerry Terhaerd	Shirley Whittaker	Irene West
September 13 RALLY SUNDAY	Darrell & Judy Renecker	Stephen Fischer	Darrell Renecker	Ellen Wolfe	NO COUNTERS
September 20	Ron & Nancy Hesas	Linda Faulhafer	Tom Cosstick	Carmen Beck	Ron Hesas
September 27	Ellen Wolfe & Carmen Beck	Carmen Beck	Brian Coe	Sister Jean	Ron Hesas



October



October 4	Bob & Marilyn Wells	Murray Scholl	Jerry Terhaerd	NEW	Isaac Whittaker
October 11 Thanksgiving	Gerald & Isabel Cook	Glenn Ritinger	Darrell Renecker	SCHEDULE	NO COUNTERS
October 18	Tom & Joanne Cosstick	Mary-Lou Drown	Tom Cosstick	NEEDED	Isaac Whittaker
October 25	Brad & Sherri Beattie	Carmen Beck	Brian Coe		Janet Chandler

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

Worship would not be the same without you!!

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

SEPTEMBER 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
16 * PENTECOST 15* 10 Worship	7 LABOUR DAY "OFFICE CLOSED"	8 7 Rotary in FH 9:30 Chair Yoga-FH 10:30 Worship & Music Mtg In Parlour 2 Greenwood Court Worship 3 CFUW in Boardroom 6:30 Rotary Board Mtg in Parlour	9 9 Quilters Return (Parlour) 2 McCarthy Place Worship 5:30 Bethel Community Meal Returns 7 Choir Returns (Chapel)	10 12 Bible Study Returns (Parlour) 2:30 Hillside Worship 6:30-8 Girl Guides in Girl Guide Room	11 9 WOF making Sandwiches in Kitchen 12-2 Seniors' Luncheon	12 10:30 Chair Lift Training
13 * PENTECOST 16 * 10 Worship 10 Sunday School Returns	14 2 Prayer Shawl in Parlour 6:30-8:30 SSYO in FH 7 Choir n Chapel	15 9:30 Chair Yoga in FH	16 9 Quilters in Parlour	17 6:30-8 Girl Guides in Girl Guide Room	18	19
RALLY SUNDAY	PASTOR JEFF AWAY	PASTOR JEFF AWAY	PASTOR JEFF AWAY	PASTOR JEFF AWAY	PASTOR JEFF AWAY	
20 * PENTECOST 17* 10 Worship / Baptism 10 Sunday School 4-8 Jesus Is Lord Church in Parlour	21 9:30 WOF Meeting in Parlour 2 Prayer Shawl in Parlour 6:30-8:30 SSYO in FH 7 Choir in Chapel	22 7 Rotary in FH 9:30 Chair Yoga-FH 7 Endowment Mtg in Parlour	23 9 Quilters in Parlour 7 Congregational Council Meeting in Parlour	24 12 Bible Study in Parlour 2:15 Knollcrest Worship 6:30-8 Girl Guides in Girl Guide Room	25 9 WOF making Sandwiches In Kitchen	26
27 * PENTECOST 18 * 10 Worship 10 Sunday School	28 2 Prayer Shawl in Parlour 6:30-8:30 SSYO in FH 7 Choir in Parlour	29 9:30 Chair Yoga-FH	30 9 Quilters in Parlour			
	SISTER JEAN AWAY	SISTER JEAN AWAY	SISTER JEAN AWAY			

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

OCTOBER 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
4 * PENTECOST 19 * 10 Worship 10 Sunday School	5 2 Prayer Shawl in Parlour 6:30-8:30 SSSYO in FH 7 Choir in Chapel	6 9:30 Chair Yoga-FH	7 9 Quilters in Parlour	1 11 Spruce Lodge Worship 4:15 Confirmation in Parlour 6:30-8 Girl Guides in Girl Guide Room SISTER JEAN AWAY	2 SISTER JEAN AWAY	3 Shower in FH (tbc)
11 * THANKSGIVING * 10 Worship 10 Sunday School	12 THANKSGIVING DAY OFFICE CLOSED	13 7 Rotary in FH 9:30 Chair Yoga in FH 2 Greenwood Worship 3 CFUW in Boardroom	14 9 Quilters in Parlour 2 McCarthy Place Worship 5:30 Bethel Community Meal	15 2 Knollcrest Worship 4:15 Confirmation in Parlour 6:30-8 Girl Guides in Girl Guide Room	16 9 WOF making Sandwiches in Kitchen 12-2 Seniors' Luncheon	17
18 * PENTECOST 21 * 10 Worship 10 Sunday School 4-8 Jesus Is Lord Church in Parlour	19 2 Prayer Shawl in Parlour 6:30-8:30 SSSYO in FH 7 Choir in Chapel	20 9:30 Chair Yoga-FH	21 9 Quilters in Parlour 7 Congregational Council Meeting in Parlour	22 12 Bible Study in Parlour 4:15 Confirmation in Parlour 6:30-8 Girl Guides in Girl Guide Room	23 9 WOF making Sandwiches in Kitchen 2-4 Seniors 80+ Birthday Party in FH	24 4 MIMMM Concert in Sanctuary
25 * REFORMATION SUNAY * 10 Worship 10 Sunday School	26 2 Prayer Shawl in Parlour 6:30-8:30 SSSYO in FH 7 Choir in Chapel	27 7 Rotary in FH 9:30 Chair Yoga-FH	28 9 Quilters in Parlour	29 12 Bible Study in Parlour 4:15 Confirmation in Parlour 6:30-8 Girl Guides in Girl Guide Room	30	31

