



Senior Pastor: Rev. Dr. Tim Philabaum
Community Pastor: Rev. Dr. Mike Brown
Seminary Intern: Kevin O'Bryan
Director of Music Ministries/Organist: Omaldo Perez
Director of Youth Ministry: Madeline Thomas
Administrative Manager: Dale Nordahl
Secretary: Carolyn Hill
Custodian: Paul Cannon

WORSHIP
SATURDAY 6:00 p.m.
SUNDAY 7:15 a.m.
8:30 a.m.
11:00 a.m.

SUNDAY SCHOOL
(September—May)
9:45 a.m.

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Perrysburg, Ohio



ZOARNEWS



WHOA! WAIT A MINUTE!

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ZOAR
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Sometimes the season of Advent can have a jarring effect on folks. We have just finished the warmth of Thanksgiving dinner and parades and football. Children are already practicing the Christmas pageant, and the choir is working on a concert and calendars are full of open houses and Christmas parties and such. At home we're getting decorations out and putting up the tree and getting the cards signed and sent out, etc.

And then we come into worship and the lector gets up and the words we hear during this warm and cozy season are: "O that you would tear open the heavens and come down," and more about things like mountains quaking and water boiling. We think, "Well, that's a prophet, that's the 'Old Testament.' What do you expect? Wait for the Gospel." But the Gospel lesson is worse: "The sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken." Are we in the right place? It's less than a month before Christmas; what is this all about?"

Advent is designed to remind us of why Christ came. The lessons and hymns during Advent were carefully created to help avoid rushing through December to Christmas Day without taking the time to ponder why we needed God to intervene in our lives and what we must do to be ready. As December rolls on, take a minute and wait. Let the season of Advent ground you in your need for Jesus.



Directions

From I-75 South:

Take the US-20/US-23 exit (exit number 193) toward PERRYSBURG/FREMONT. Then Turn left onto N. Sandusky St. (US-23/US-20) Zoar is about a mile ahead on the right side of the road.

From I-75 North:

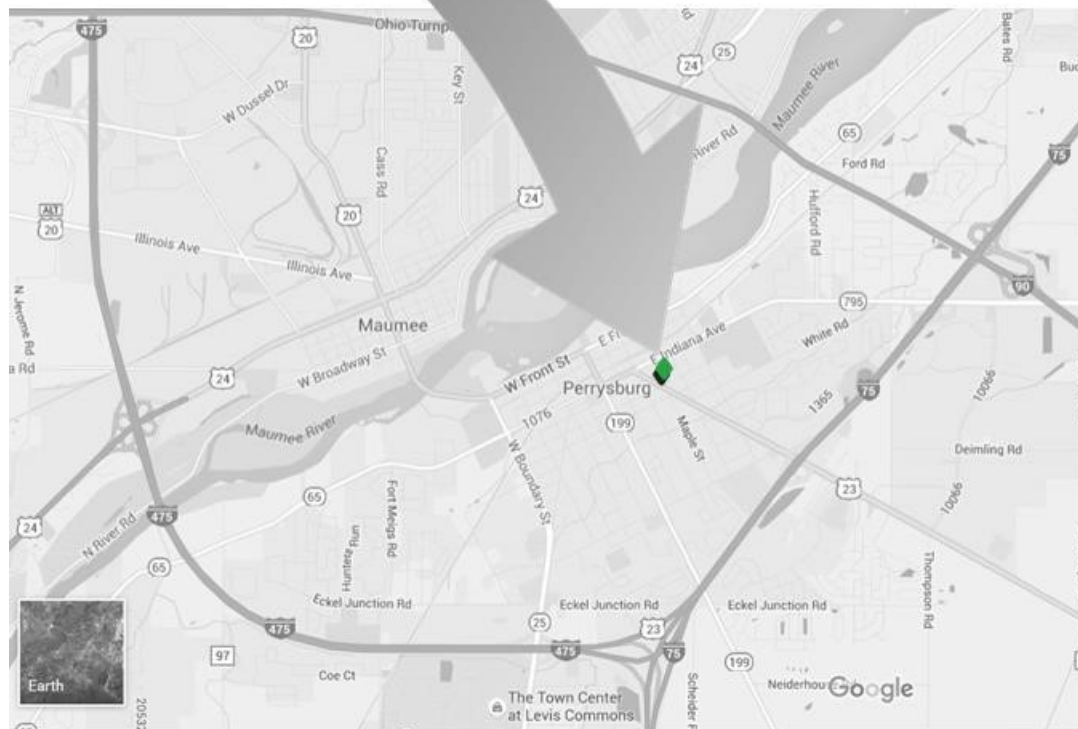
Merge onto Sandusky St/US-20 (exit number 193) toward PERRYSBURG/FORT MEIGS. Keep going straight. Zoar is about a mile ahead on the right side of the road.

*Zoar is an inclusive
barrier-free community*



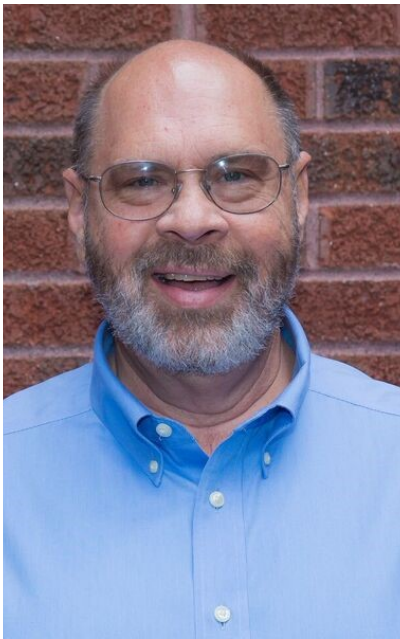
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from
Pastor Tim

Senior Pastor

pastortim@zoarlutheran.com

Last month Kate and I were able to go to her brother's wedding where our three children and spouses and grandchildren (Addison at 4th grade, Juniper at 6 months, and Milan 9 weeks old) were with us for several days. It was great to be with family, and awesome to see how well our kids are as parents! I also was again aware of the amount of "stuff" that accompanies a young one – stuff to keep them safe, warm, and clean.

Not to connect my grandchildren with the Holy Babe, but Christmas is upon us. We know the story: the young, pregnant, (by divine means) engaged woman and her possibly older fiancé travel



to a different city in which the Babe is delivered amongst animals. I don't think they carried suitcases, or car-carriers, or extra diapers, or wet-wipes, or extra clothing, or a pacifier, or anything like that. They went, arrived, and without medical attention, the Babe was born.

Of course, angels were there, singing the whole time; smelly shepherds arrived to give praise; and then, maybe up to two years later, when the Holy Family was in a house, the Magi arrived from the East to bring gifts and worship. As the story goes, Herod (boo, hiss) tries to kill the Child, who escapes to Egypt until Herod's death, then all go back to Nazareth.

When I am with a baby, I am in awe at their beauty, their innocence, their personhood, and their need for care. Some of those images play on my mind when I come to the manger, too. But there's something far greater here. Jesus is the key.

You've heard the saying, "Jesus is the reason for the season." Yea, this Babe is different. In Him is all the joy of the universe! In Him is all the hope for those who are cast off, or alone, or grieving. In him no one needs to be afraid (even in our present days!). In Him all our sins and brokenness have been nailed to the cross, buried in the tomb, raised from the dead. In him is life, life for me.

This year, when you come to the gift of Christmas, look at the Child, and be amazed. He has come for you. He has come because of God's love for you – forever! And with those small hands God embraces the whole world. Thank you, Jesus!

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WORSHIP SERVANTS FOR DECEMBER

<u>USHERS</u>		7:15	8:30	11:00	<u>SATURDAY USHERS</u>	
December		Larry Anning Ray Ruswinkle	Dick Cox Ralph Debbe Ted Weaver Dave Stuckey	Terry Harris Scott Loehrke	3	Ken & Carolyn Vajen
					10	Terry & Rhonda Jones
					17	Dave & Sue Gogel
					31	Jim Laine, Charlie Rinker
<u>LECTORS</u>		7:15	8:30	11:00		
December 4		Judy Schult	Mary Richter	Melissa Miller		
11		Janis Stein	Ken Meinecke	Neil Englehart		
18		Ray Ruswinkle	Karen Lundholm	Nathan Englehart		
<u>ACOLYTES</u>		8:30	11:00			
December 4		Leah Schroeder	Charlotte Keller			
11		Marissa Thomas				
18		Allison Myers	Sierra Stalzer			
<u>ASSISTING MINISTERS</u>		7:15	8:30	11:00		
December 4		Dorothy Beyer	Roger Geffe	Don Lieder		
11			Carole Bohn			
18		Karen Lundholm	Scott Geffe	Roger Shoffner		
<u>GREETERS</u>		8:30	11:00	<u>SATURDAY GREETERS</u>		
December 4		Ackermans, Marcia Amstutz	Cynthia Blubaugh, High School Youth	3	Cheryl & Ellen Williams	
11		Heslups, C. Caldwell, T. Easterman	Jo Moulton, Hetricks	10	Dave & Sue Gogel	
18		Lida Ryan, Doris Henline	Lieders, Dorothy Beyer	17	Ken & Carolyn Vagen	
<u>SOUND</u>		8:30	11:00	<u>SATURDAY SOUND</u>		
<u>COUNTERS</u>						
December 4		Russ & Nancy Heckman, Jane Tomko				
11		Chuck & Nancy Elvers, Heidi & Derek Meyer				
18		Jim Kwasniak, Tom Dayton				
25		Glenn & Mary Ann Abke, Alice Coy				
<u>ALTAR GUILD</u>		7:15	8:30	11:00		
December 4		N. Johnson, J. Schroeder	D. Ehrmin, S. Warren, T. Young	L. Hoverson, D. Besly, P. McNutt		
11		Linda Hagedorn	Vicki Karnes	Sunday School Program		
18		Linda Hagedorn	Jackie Springer	Carolyn St. Meyers		
23		7:00 pm Donna Besly				
24		3:30 D. Ehrmin, S. Warren, E. Ehrmin	6:00 S. Todt, V. Karnes	8:30 L. Hagedorn C. Miller	11:00 N. Johnson L.	
Hoverson						
25		10:00 am Donna Besly				

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Lois Widdel

2 Eleanor Merrill

3 Elizabeth Kaczar

9 Walter Krueger

15 Cathy King

17 Kathleen Heath

18 Esther Speck
- 22 Dorothy Samson

24 Betty Creps

28 Ann Lieder

29 Jane St. John



HAVE YOUR BEST CHRISTMAS EVER!

Before the tree goes up, before the outside decorations, before the annual gift-buying binge begins, consider this: Every year the Christmas holiday season seems to find new levels of extreme. Before you are swept up in the latest fads and excesses, invest a small amount of time and/or money into an Advent wreath. It will be one of the greatest investments you make for yourself and those of your household. Here’s why:



The weeks before Christmas are called Advent and lead us into a season of preparation for Christmas. Christians prepare for celebrating the birth of Jesus by remembering the longing of the Jews for a Messiah. In Advent, we’re reminded of how much we ourselves also need a Savior, and we look forward to our Savior’s second coming even as we prepare to celebrate his first coming at Christmas. The word “Advent” comes from the Latin word *adventus*, which means “coming” or “visit.” In the season with this name, we keep in mind both “advents” of Christ, the first in Bethlehem and the second yet to come.

It might feel odd to think of the weeks before Christmas as something more than Christmastime. But many people have found the tradition of Advent a very effective practice to help keep perspective. Advent helps us get ready, not for a present-opening party, but for a transformational celebration of the birth of Jesus.

Join with Christians around the world in counting down the Sundays to the birth of Jesus Christ. Consider getting an Advent wreath for your home. Placing it a prominent place in your home and lighting the candles with everyone in your house.



from
Omaldo
Director of Music Ministries,
Organist
operez@zoarlutheran.com

Advent and Christmas are exciting times for us Christians, times when we have a chance to engage anew with one of the great mysteries of the faith: that by coming into the world, the maker of the universe showed solidarity with us creatures and experienced the brokenness of the world out of love. This truth baffles the mind.

So I would like to invite you to meditate on the many facets of this love. On Friday, December 16 at 7:00 p.m. Zoar will present *Gloria: Musical Portraits of the Nativity*. This event will be a rich sonic exploration of the joy and beauty of the birth of Jesus, and it will feature special music from Zoar's Chancel Choir, the Agape Bells, soloists, and instrumentalists. I look forward to seeing you there.





from Madeline

Director of Youth Ministry
mthomas@zoarlutheran.com

When I was in Madagascar, one of my favorite memories was Christmas Eve. The countryside church (named Zoara, Malagasy for Zoar!) where I taught English classes celebrated with a special children's program. Members had decorated the humble brick church with tinsel trimmings and a real live pine tree! There was no electricity but someone had linked an extension cord from a nearby house for the choir's microphone and keyboard. We sang Alina Masina (Silent Night) and relished being together. It was simple, much like the original Christmas morning. I hope that you and your family can find that same joy and peace this season!



CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Zoar Kids present **Just a Little Christmas**

Sunday, December 11th
at the 11:00 worship service
Cookie reception follows in the Family Life Center

Come and support our kids and youth as they share the cherished story and good news of Jesus' birth. Sing along with Christmas favorites such as "We Three Kings," "O Little Town of Bethlehem," "Mary Did You Know?" and more!

Rehearsals: December 4th and 11th during the Sunday School hour



Over the Table: Young Family Christmas Party

Sunday, December 18th from 4:00 - 6:00 PM

Young families of all kinds are invited to the home of Jameson and Lindsay Czech for food and fun. Childcare will be provided.

For more information, please contact Heidi Meyer at
Heidi.a.meyer54@gmail.com or at 567. 277. 0269
or join the "Zoar Young Marrieds w/ Kids" Facebook page



MEET BILL KING

Thanks to Bill King, each and every Sunday Zoar has plenty of coffee and hot water for tea. He has been arriving every Sunday at 6:30 am to do this for the congregation for forty years. Yes, that's right — four zero — 40. Next time you see Bill around the church, shake his hand and tell him, "Thank you!" Bill has also served as an usher and the head of the Property Committee for several decades, lovingly caring for the building and grounds with other faithful volunteers.

He is one of dozens of Zoar's wonderful volunteers. He has discovered the joy of finding a need and meeting it for the benefit of others.



SAVE THE DATE!!

HAWAIIAN LUAU SATURDAY, JAN 28 7PM ZOAR FLC



PCU FOOD BANK FUNDRAISER
including GUEST HULA
TEACHER from Hawaii

ALOHA!!

Ready for a Hawaiian Get-Away? Fresh flower leis! Poi, Shoyu Chicken, Oven Roasted Kalua Pork, Pork Lau Lau and Tropical Dessert Bar! You're invited to sample the tastes and traditions of Hawaii at a Zoar Luau on **Saturday, January 28 at 7:00pm**. The \$15 adult ticket will benefit PCU Food Bank. Learn the hula from our guest instructor visiting from Hawaii and enjoy fruity mocktails for a night of great fun, games, prizes and authentic food. Guests are encouraged to wear their favorite Hawaiian shirt and flip-flops. Chase the winter blues away while supporting PCU. Tickets will be sold in early January or reservations can be made through the church office.

For now . . . SAVE THE DATE!!



FEED OUR FAMILIES GROWS WITH THE SEASON



What is this a picture of you ask? They are invitations to 49 local families that Zoar Lutheran church assists through the summer. These are 49 families who work, go to school, have medical issues, and raise kids. While their children are in school they qualify for free or reduced breakfast and lunch. When the kids are home for summer vacation or winter break there is no help. Imagine now that it is Christmas and the budget doesn't stretch as far. Feed Our Families is hosting our first Christmas distribution December 17, 2016. We have invited 49 families with a total of 135 children, which we serve during our summer distribution. We will be providing a bag of groceries and personal items and a gift card for each child, but would also like to give the parents an opportunity to do additional shopping for their children, as well as give the children an opportunity to shop for their parents. This is where you can help. We are looking for the following donations:

- *new or gently used toys for children of all ages
- *handmade scarves (do you knit or crochet?)
- *like new jewelry that could be given from a child to a parent
- *any other items that may make nice gifts from a child to a parent (how many best parent mugs do you have?)

I know that there are many, many groups looking for your money this time of year. I want your stuff that you don't need, or that your kids don't play with anymore. If you have anything you would like to donate, please let me know at tracyrickman@hotmail.com

Thank you, Tracy Rickman



CHRISTMAS TOY PROJECT

It's time for the annual Christmas Toy Project, a joint effort which has been sponsored for many years by the Perrysburg Township Fire Dept. and Perrysburg Christians United. This community effort has been a part of northern Wood County's "Operation Bread Basket," but unfortunately, after this year, these two organizations won't be able to continue with the project. We expect over 100 families again this year with approximately 150 children! Please bring only new toys to Zoar and place them unwrapped in the collection box in the Gathering Area by December 11th. Toys/gifts suitable for pre-teens and teenagers are also needed, and cash donations are welcome for PCU to purchase gifts. If you prefer to write a check, please make it payable to Perrysburg Christians United, mark it for "toy project," and place it in the offering plate. Thank you very much!



OPEN GYM SCHEDULE

There are lots of Zoar members and friends who love to stay active during the winter months! We are offering a series of open gyms in the FLC:

- **Wednesday December 21st for Families/All Ages from 6:00-7:30 PM**

Bring friends and sports equipment! Some rec equipment will be provided for use. Please do not bring baseballs/softballs or bats. Questions? Contact Madeline. More open gym dates will be posted in the coming weeks.



PEER MINISTRY LEADERSHIP

Zoar Youth are embarking on an exciting journey this month as they are trained in Peer Ministry Leadership Training on December 2nd and 3rd. The initial training for high school youth will then be extended to junior high youth in the months to come. What is Peer Ministry Leadership? It's an amazing opportunity for our congregation!

Three Reasons You'll Want Peer Ministry Leadership Training at your Church

- 1) **"It's an education of the heart."** – PML gives youth specific skills in caring for their friends. They learn how to listen, ask caring questions, and guide friends through choices, changes, and challenges. They welcome people, even those who are not always welcomed.
- 2) **"Kids are either leading or they are leaving."** – Your kids are busy. They are going to invest their time where they are needed. They will respond to real purpose and real meaning. PML gives them purpose and meaning that impacts their number one concern, their relationships.
- 3) **"There is no youth ministry, until kids are doing ministry."** – Ministry is not about planning and putting on events. Ministry is when youth are making a difference, caring, welcoming and affirming, making life better for others.



Youth Group Update

Sunday December 4th
High School Youth Group 5-7

Sunday December 11th
High School Youth Group 5-7

Saturday December 17th
Service Project: 7th-12th grade
Feed Our Families Distribution
Youth lead children's activities
9:30-Noon at Zoar

Sunday December 18th
High School Babysitters at
Young Families Christmas Party
*must RSVP

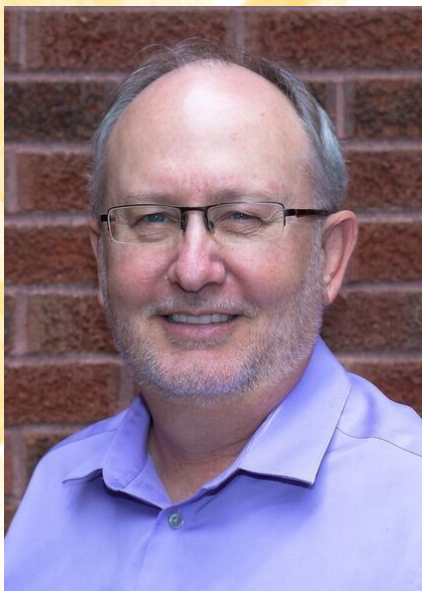
Sunday December 25th
No youth group
Merry Christmas!

Sunday January 1st
No youth group
Happy New Year!

Sunday January 8th
High School Youth Group 5-7

Friends are always welcome!





from

Pastor Mike

Community Pastor
pastormike@zoarlutheran.com

When I was around seven years old, my parents went over-the-top in buying Christmas gifts for their children. By their own admission, they went overboard. The family room was wall to wall with presents. They loved the sight of seeing their kids surrounded by such blessing. They loved their kids. Honestly, I cannot remember one gift they gave that year. What I do remember, though, is the deep love we all felt for each other. As you celebrate first Advent and then Christmas, I pray that you will know the deep love of friends, family, and of Zoar Lutheran Church.



CHRISTMAS AT ZOAR

WORSHIP FOR CHRISTMAS and NEW YEAR'S DAY

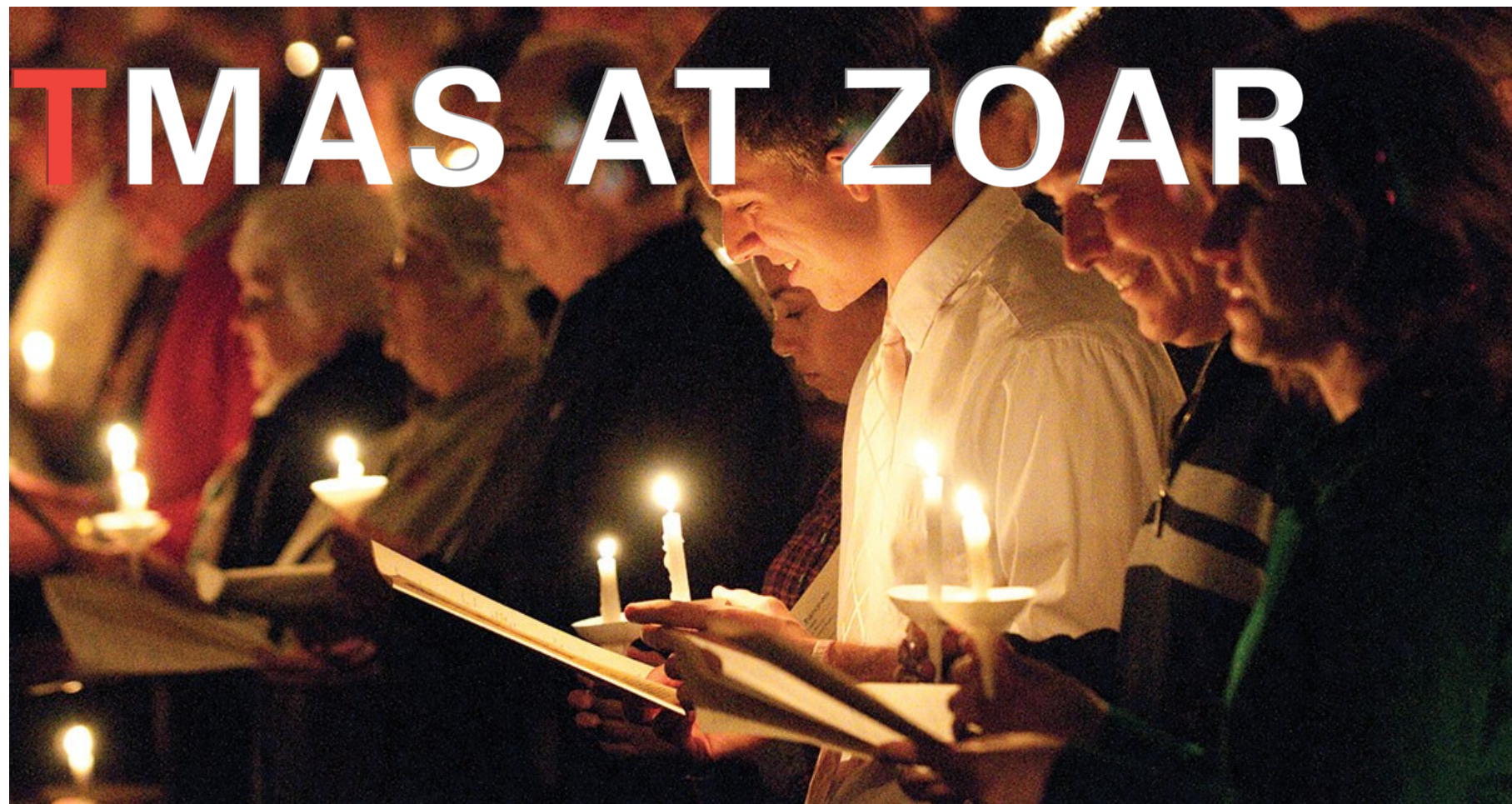
**Christmas Eve Eve, December 23,
7pm**

We will begin our worship on Friday night,
singing in the joy of our Lord's birth

**Christmas Eve, December 24,
3:30, 6:00, 8:30, and 11:00pm**
"O come let us adore Him, Christ our Lord!"

Christmas Day, December 25, 10am
We will have only one worship service on
Sunday, the Birth of Jesus.

New Year's weekend
Saturday, December 31, 6pm
Sunday, January 1, 10am will be our one wor-
ship service for this Sunday, still singing of
Jesus' birth!



Blue Christmas
Healing in the midst of grief
December 18th at 3:00 pm



Not everyone feels merry this time of year. "Blue" is more how you would describe it. Sometimes singing "Joy to the World" just doesn't work when you are weighed down by loss and grief. "Blue Christmas Worship" is for all who need a Christmas worship experience that allows a healthy acknowledgement of one's personal losses. Come join us for this special service.

CONCERT

**Gloria: Musical
Portraits of the
Nativity**

Friday
December 16
7:00 PM