

ZOARNEWS



ZOAR
LUTHERAN CHURCH
GATHERS | GROWS | GIVES



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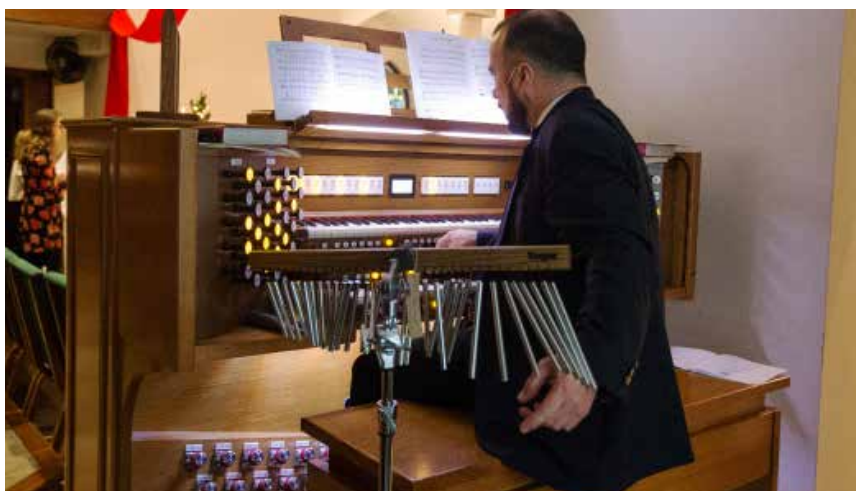
A.G.O. RECITAL

FEBRUARY 4TH

3:00 PM

On Sunday, February 4th, at 3 pm the members of the local chapter of the American Guild of Organists (AGO) will present a joint recital at Zoar Lutheran Church. Featuring Zoar's versatile Rogers-Ruffatti organ, the musicians will share musical selections from many times and places as they explore the sonic possibilities of this King of instruments.

Come and hear musical variety as you have not heard it before. A free-will offering will be collected and a reception will follow the recital.



www.zoarlutheran.com

VALENTINE'S DAY TO APRIL FOOL'S DAY



These are two amazing dates in the secular calendar! Valentine's Day, originally a day to remember the martyrdom of St. Valentine and the love he had for his beloved, now is a day for us to express our love. And April Fool's Day, which became a joking day, humiliating those who forgot that the New Year had moved to January 1, continues as a day of jokes and pranks. Surprise!

These days will frame Lent, 2018. The fantastic juxtaposition on the Day of Love is that on one hand St. Valentine was martyred because he believed in the love of Jesus, and on the other hand it is precisely in our humanity that God in Jesus loves us so much. Ash Wednesday is not just a morbid realization, but a reality check – we are mortal, we will die, and we are loved. This is the greatest Valentine "card" ever given!

The 40 days (plus Sundays) in Lent then help us prepare. By the end of March we will have entered the Upper Room with the disciples, have had our feet washed, and have received Jesus in the bread and wine; we will sing our songs and prayers, and then head to the Garden; we will sleep while Jesus prays and is betrayed; we will witness as Jesus is crucified, dies, and is buried.

**This much makes sense in our world. We know betrayal.
We know death and burial. We are acquainted to grief and loss.**

So imagine the surprise when Mary Magdalene goes to the tomb early on Sunday, to find that Jesus had been raised from the dead! Inconceivable! How fun that Easter this year falls on April Fool's Day! The Gospels record the surprise and unbelief of the disciples, and we see the same in our world today. How can it be that God in Jesus has risen from the dead? How can it be that someday we too shall rise? Is it really an April Fool's? The joy of our faith is that what may seem foolish to the world is in reality God's truth – that we are so beloved by God, that God in Jesus gave God's self so completely in death that we too might live with God. I am amaZed!

Love and surprise! Mortality and resurrection. In these days, let God's grace surround you with hope and joy!

Pastor Tim
Senior Pastor
pastortim@zoarlutheran.com

LOOKING BACK TO LOOK FORWARD

TEAMWORK BOTH BEHIND US AND AHEAD OF US

I've heard it said and read it in print that in order to know where you're going you've got to know where you've been. In other words, you've got to look back in order to look forward. As I look back on the past year at Zoar, the one word that comes to mind is TEAMWORK. Each area of ministry that I have been privileged to be a part of stands out because of the teamwork involved. Teamwork is what made Zoar's annual stewardship appeal so successful. Close to 70 people had a hand in creating the Transformed by Grace, Faith, and Love campaign that resulted in written financial commitments from 250 Zoar members to Jesus' work in the world. Teamwork is what has made Zoar's New Member Sunday so successful. Over a hundred people made Zoar their church home in 2017. There is no one reason people join the church. In fact, there are dozens of reasons including the warm greeting people receive, the terrific music during worship, the children's events, Zoar's music groups, the way ushers hand out bulletins, the small groups, the work the youth do, and on and on. For every one person that joins the church there are more than a dozen people who have helped make it possible. Teamwork is what makes Zoar's growth in small groups so successful. There are now over a hundred adults involved in a small group at Zoar. These include groups for women, men, Married Couples with Young Children, Parents of Young Adult Children, Young Couples with No Kids, Pickleball enthusiasts, Bowlers, Bridge lovers, basketball players, Cyclists (Slow Roll), Music, Bible study, and on and on. Teamwork is what makes our work to end hunger through Kitchen of Hope and Feed Our Families and our efforts to provide aid to the poor with quilts, blankets, and knitted items so successful year after year. Teamwork is what has made our efforts to communicate grow by leaps and bounds. Teamwork is what made Zoar's weekly worship attendance grow by almost 10% in 2017. Teamwork is what made Zoar's annual giving increase by 11% in 2017 over 2016. Teamwork is why Zoar's worship attendance increased by 12% in 2017 over 2016.

Looking back, there is a lot to celebrate. Looking forward there is a lot to do. What I see for the coming year and beyond is more of the same blessings. These are some of the efforts that God is richly blessing among us: 1) Small groups; 2) Stewardship; 3) Evangelism (church growth). Small groups: If 2017 was the year for launching Date Nite groups (for Married Couples with Young Children), then 2018 will be the year for launching several Christ Care groups, a new Faith, Science, and Technology Group, and a Hunting and Fishing group. Christ Care groups are monthly meetings of people of various ages and backgrounds for fun discussion, lite Bible study, and snacks. Stewardship: If 2017 was the year of our renewed annual Fall fund appeal, 2018 will introduce a renewed Time and Talent Spring campaign and a new legacy giving campaign. Church Growth: If 2017 was a year for 9% growth in attendance and an added 100 new members, then 2018 calls us to continue that path.

If the recent past teaches us the benefit of teamwork in Christ's work in the world, so shall the future. I encourage each and every one of us to do some soul-searching and ask ourselves if we are offering up to God our best effort for the life we share at Zoar.

Pastor Mike
Community Pastor
pastormike@zoarlutheran.com

CONFIRMATION RETREAT

Out of the church and into the woods!

Our confirmation class will be attending a state-wide confirmation retreat on February 16th-18th. Lutheran Memorial Camp, a part of Lutheran Outdoor Ministries in Ohio, will be running the retreat. This will be an awesome opportunity to learn about our faith, experience God in new and exciting ways, and do it with kids from across the state! The theme for the weekend is Discipleship Redefined, and our students will be looking forward to a weekend of hiking, playing group games, crafts, campfires, Bible studies, and worship.

This camp is a wonderful opportunity for our students to get to dive deeper into their faith and have fun while doing it. Additionally, they will get to experience how other people their age engages with faithful discipleship and learning, undoubtedly making friends along the way.



Retreats like this are important for our youth and adults alike to have a diverse experience in what it means to be Christians.

By immersing ourselves in God's creation, we can remove some of the noise that can make faithful learning difficult. We can see the power of our Creator God, and we are also reminded that we do not undertake this alone, but within a community of believers. When we can come together to learn about God and faithful living, while also worshiping and enjoying God's presence, we are reminded just how big our God is, impacting all people from every place and age.

This will be a wonderful experience that Zoar is facilitating for our younger people, though the generous support of the congregation. We should be proud that we are able to invest time and treasure into our confirmands now and in the future. Please pray for our youth for safety and learning for this exciting event!

ZOAR MARDI GRAS CELEBRATION

Join us on Saturday, February 10th from 7:00-9:00pm as we celebrate Mardi Gras at Zoar Lutheran Church! This family event is open to all ages, and we will have something for everyone.

There will be King Cake and Paczki, a "mocktail" bar, mask making, red beans and rice, hot dogs, special entertainment and music.

For more information or to volunteer, please contact Kristen Scasny at 419-308-9203.

YOUTH STORIES

There are many heroes behind-the-scenes at Zoar, and a goal of this section is to help you get to know who they are and what they do for our youth ministries. This month, we'd like to introduce you to Marianne Wagner, the HS and Young Adult Sunday School instructor.

We spoke with Mrs. Wagner last month as the new year came around. She began by saying, "The level of maturity, empathy, humor, and faith demonstrated by the youth brings me so much joy... Zoar is really blessed with extraordinary kids!" That's exactly why she's taught for over seven years. She explains, "I found this was the age kids actually wanted to discuss their faith and how to put their values into action." As she discovered, becoming our teacher would be a very rewarding experience!

So what about the things she actually does? Well, we were lucky enough to learn the secret recipe to a Sunday School lesson! Her first step: Faith Lens, the ELCA's blog. "This connects world events with the Bible, faith, and everyday life. I then use discussion and videos to tie in the message." Lately she's shown videos from a group called J&S Authentic Bible Productions - jokingly dubbed "the crowd favorite," as they are far from authentic.

Mrs. Wagner's true colors really show in her choice of two wishes: "For people to live by the Golden Rule and for time to move slower!" We couldn't disagree. From all those touched by her loving care, we dearly thank her for all she has done and continues to do for the youth.



2018 REDEEMER SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAM



Summer Youth Program at Redeemer (located at 1702 Upton Ave) is a two 4-week programs that meet from 8:00 to 1:00 pm Monday through Friday from June 11 to July 3rd and July 9 to August 3rd to provide enriching summer activities and nutritious meals to neighborhood youth. This much-needed program supports the families of the working poor by providing a safe place for children to be during the day as well as providing food for families with limited resources. We rely on a multi-generational and diverse staff from mission churches and from the neighborhood to provide programming in the areas of Music, Arts, Recreation, and Bible study.

In addition several staff are needed to be Group Leaders, Preschool Leaders, or Camp Grandparents. Paid staff should be available for all or most of the summer; volunteers are welcomed as their schedule permits. Service hour requirements can also be met.

Application deadline is June 1. Application form and job descriptions available on Redeemer's website. www.redeemertoledo.com or email leighann.meinecke@gmail.com

A PERSON WHO SINGS PRAYS TWICE

"Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things!" Psalm 98:1

"In times of joy, all of us wish we had a tail we could wag" W. H. Auden

The two quotes above, wagging tails aside, speak to me of faith and trust. Keeping in mind the confidence that God's promises instill in our hearts, I would like us to think about how we sing (or not sing) during worship. Do we "check out" during the hymns, or during holy communion? Or, preferably, do we engage with the texts in silent meditation? Or even better, do we express our gratitude through singing - as we receive a "foretaste of the feast to come" in Jesus' very flesh and blood?

It is no secret that active participation in any endeavor is much more beneficial for our spiritual and physical health. Do we feel joy in the presence of God? Do we experience "the beauty of holiness"? Do we experience awe? Sometimes gratitude and earnest devotion just aren't enough to express ourselves. Only singing praise seems adequate. So I entreat you to sing with abandon during worship not forgetting what St. Augustine said so many centuries ago: "a person who sings prays twice."

Omaldo

Director of Music/Organist
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WEDNESDAY LENTEN MEALS

As we prepare for the season of Lent, it is again time to schedule our Wednesday Lenten Meals. Beginning on Ash Wednesday and continuing throughout the Lenten season, we will have meals served for lunch and supper. However, we need your help. We are asking individuals, groups, or committees to prepare and serve the meals. This year, the meals will consist of soups/salads, casseroles/salads, or a baked potato bar. Lunch will be served at noon following the 11:00 am service.

Prior to the evening service (7:00 PM), supper will be served from 5:30 PM until 6:30 PM.

If you are interested in serving Zoar or need additional information, please contact Margie and Tom Iserman at iserprsn@bex.net or 419-874-5215. There is no charge for these meals, however, donations will be accepted. This year's donations will again help fund the Summer Youth Program at Redeemer Lutheran Church (Zoar's mission partner congregation in Toledo).



ASH WEDNESDAY AND LENT

The journey is about to begin. We will walk together 40 days (plus Sundays) to the cross and empty grave, preparing ourselves for the fullness of the outpouring of God's love in Jesus. This year the five Wednesdays following Ash Wednesday will find their center in prayer and in the fruits of the Spirit. A "prayer-journal" will be created to support your prayer journey throughout these days. Each Wednesday we will have worship at 11 AM and 7 PM, with lunch following the first service, and supper from 5:30 – 7 PM. A Prayer-walk Labyrinth will be set up for those who wish to take time to pray as they walk in the guided circle.

The Lenten journey will begin on February 14, Ash Wednesday. An additional brief worship service will begin the day at 7:00 AM for those headed to work. At all services on this day we will have ashes imposed upon us, symbols of our mortality, as well as the gift of Holy Communion given.

The themes of the other Wednesdays in Lent will be:

Date	Prayer Pattern	Fruits of the Holy Spirit
February 21	Lectio Divina (Prayer through Scripture)	Love and Joy
February 28	Centering and Mindfulness	Peace and Patience
March 7	Model Prayer (Lord's and ACTS) <i>(adoration, confession, thanksgiving, supplication)</i>	Kindness and Gentleness
March 14	Guided Meditation	Generosity
March 21	Psalm – Embodiment of Praying	Faithfulness and Self-Control

May our loving God guide you in this time of reflection and growth, as you deepen your practices of faith, and journey closer to the empty tomb.

LENTEN LUNCHES OFFERING

Offerings collected at the Lenten Lunches and Suppers will help to support Redeemer's Summer Youth Program, an outreach program of Zoar and other mission partner churches. Please earmark on the envelope or subject line that the money is for Redeemer.

Social Ministry set a goal of \$5000 over the six Wednesdays of Lent. As we reach our goal a mystery painting will be revealed step-by-step on the stairs leading from the gathering space to the sanctuary! Watch the space to see our progress.



GATHERGROWGIVE



YOUNG MARRIED WITH KIDS

Hi! We are Dante & Sarah Flores.

Dante has been a Zoar member since 2009

Sarah is a lifelong member.

We have 3 children. Chloe is 18, Riley is 7 and Greyson is 4 years old. We love Zoar because of the people and the sense of family and friendship we have from being members of Zoar. One of the ways that we have connected more with the church is by becoming involved in the Young Married with Kids group. We started attending events with this group a year and a half ago and started hosting a "Date Night" about a year ago.



Connecting with this group has allowed us to grow as parents, as a couple and as a family; in our faith and friendships.

The Young Married with Kids group allows people to connect in different events. We host a date night monthly at our house; this is an opportunity for families to come together and enjoy an evening out. The church provides child care at our home so adults can enjoy fellowship while having the comfort of knowing their kids are close by. We watch videos about faith and have open dialogs about them.



Another opportunity for the Young Married with Kids group is for couples to connect. We have participated in two ugly sweater parties at Christmas time, a luncheon, and a dinner where the event is just for adults and the kids are at the church with their friends doing crafts, playing, and having fun.

These events are fun because you are able to connect with your spouse and other adults while knowing that your kids are having a great time with their friends.

Most recently we have participated in a very informal “ladies night out” and “guys night out”. The various opportunities that this group provides is amazing. As adults we love being able to participate in events with our families and also do things as a couple. We feel so blessed that we have met such wonderful people that we now consider family and friends. We truly look forward to everything we do with this group and always have a great time.

For our children this group has provided a multitude of friendships for them that we hope last their lifetimes. It is really hard to pick a favorite thing that we’ve done with this group, but our favorites seem to be Date Night, family camping at Mowana and the ugly sweater Christmas party. We feel like this group is a wonderful group for anyone looking to further their connection with the church and its members. It is also a great opportunity for kids to meet other kids. There is truly something for everyone in this group and we look forward to many many more years and fun memories.

Dante & Sarah Flores

If you are interested in joining the Young Married with Kids group or another one of Zoar’s ChristCare Groups please get in touch with Pastor Mike at pastormike@zoarlutheran.com



FEBRUARY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Men's Breakfast	2 Zoar Book Club	3 WORSHIP
4 AGO Members Recital Wilma Jimison Birthday	5 Flute Choir Practice	6 Piece Corps Quilting	7 Bible Study	8 Agape Bells	9	10 Yarns of Love
11 Genesis Bible Study Janis Higbie Birthday	12 Ruth Circle Paul Sargent Birthday	13 The Struggle is Real	14 Ash Wednesday Worship Marian Michaelis Birthday	15 Naomi Circle Alice Parrish Birthday	16 Confirmation Class Overnight	17 Prayer Partners
18 The Gathering	19 Solomon's Porch	20 Pickleball William Ault Birthday	21 Lenten Worship	22 Chancel Choir	23 Kitchen of Hope Children's Choir of NWO with Zoar Children	24 Worship
25 Jr. High & High School Youth Group	26 Helen Dimick, Jed Hazel, and Carol Henschen Birthday	27 The Struggle is Real	28 Lenten Worship William King Birthday			

FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF EVENTS VISIT
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Senior Pastor:	Rev. Dr. Tim Philabaum
Community Pastor:	Rev. Dr. Mike Brown
Seminary Intern:	Kevin O'Bryan
Director of Music/Organist:	Omaldo Perez
Director of Youth Ministry:	
Director of Communications:	Mollie Rauscher
Administrative Manager:	Dale Nordahl
Secretary:	Suzanne DeLaney
Custodian:	Paul Cannon

CURRENT RESIDENT OR

Worship	
Saturday	6:00 PM
Sunday	7:15 AM
	8:30 AM
	11:00 AM
Sunday School	9:45 AM September - May

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From I-75 South:

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From I-75 North:

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



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