

Amaz**ing!**News

JANUARY // 2019



A MONTHLY PUBLICATION FROM ZOAR LUTHERAN CHURCH | WWW.ZOARLUTHERAN.COM

INSIDE

People Working Together	Pg. 2
Singing for the Stage	Pg. 3
Advent Workshop	Pg. 4
Snow Adventure	Pg. 5
Small Groups	Pg. 6
Reunited Families	Pg. 8
Ways to Give	Pg. 9

ZOAR: CHRISTIANITY FOR A NEW GENERATION

While Mark Twain was in London in 1897 concerns circulated that he was gravely ill, followed by a rumor that he had died. When Twain was told about this by a reporter, he quipped: "The reports of my death are greatly exaggerated." Much the same could be said of Christianity in the US these days. Polls released by the respected Pew Center reveal that Christianity is experiencing significant changes. Changing yes, dying no. One major change in Christianity is that more and more people under 35 do not identify as Christian. They are not anti-Jesus, or opposed to God, so to speak. They just have separated themselves from the institution of the church and official Christianity. Their top reasons include perceived hostility on the part of "Christians" to gays and lesbians, "Christian" rejection of modern science, "Christian" judgmentalism against those who are different, and the association of "Christianity" with a specific political party. Pew Center's 2007 Religious Landscape study, which surveyed 35,000 respondents, found that about 16% of Americans claimed no religious affiliation. By 2015, that number had grown to 23%, almost one in four Americans. If this trend continues, and most researchers believe that it will, the "unaffiliated" or "nones" of society will become increasingly prominent and perhaps even become a majority.

Continued on Page 3



from
Neil Englehart
Exiting Church Council President



PEOPLE WORKING TOGETHER

Last January as I started my term as Council President we held a retreat at 577 Foundation to set goals for the coming year. As we approach the end of my term not everything is complete, but we have made a lot of progress. We have drafted a new constitution for Zoar, improved our time and talent and volunteer recruitment procedures, brought in a new youth director, moved forward on the renovation of the courtyard, and much else besides.

None of this would have been possible without help from many others. Over the course of the year I have come to appreciate how the working of Zoar relies on the coordination of a large, complex and interlocking set of people. We tend to notice this only when things break down.

It is worthwhile to take a moment to appreciate how much unity and cooperation there is. Zoar's special qualities are the result of people working together, making something larger than themselves. All the ushers, lectors, greeters, Sunday school teachers, cooks, sound board operators, altar guild, all the committees, council, the staff, the choir, and many, many others together make Zoar what it is.

This year has been an education for me in the truth of Paul's letter to the Romans. He writes: "As in one body, we have many members and all the members do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another."

ANNUAL MEETING

FEBRUARY 3RD, 12 PM

Zoar's annual meeting begins at 12 PM in the Sanctuary February 3RD. During the meeting we will celebrate the many ways God has blessed Zoar this past year. We will also approve a budget, the new Zoar Constitution, elect council members, officers and committee members.

Continued from Page 1

If what is true of all American society is true of the Toledo area, where does that leave Zoar? Are we a church soon to be over-taken by the departures of the younger generations? Are we a church that is going to die-out as our oldest members join the church triumphant? By no means! The reason is this. Of all the things that the "nones" or "unaffiliated" list as turn-offs to church, Zoar is the opposite. Zoar is the Toledo-area answer for adults under 35 who have checked-out of organized Christianity. This new generation values acceptance gays and lesbians as children of God. That is Zoar! For "nones" who prize science, Zoar is the place! We practice a Christianity that has celebrated science since Luther. For those looking for a judgement free zone, Zoar is that zone! Have you noticed the young Muslim woman who attends Zoar weekly? She comes because she feels loved and not judged. For those tired of political agendas in religion, again, Zoar is free from particular political party or ideology. These are the facts. As you look to the future and wonder what is in store for your church in a nation where religion seems to be slipping away, remind yourself that Zoar is what today's religious pilgrims are seeking. The only question, really, is are we willing to do what is necessary to reach them?

SINGING FOR THE STAGE

BEGINS JANUARY 26TH 9 AM

Singing for the Stage is a vocal arts workshop-and-scenes program for upper elementary, middle and high school students (4th to 12th grade). The program will be directed by Sonia and Omaldo Perez. The camp has a registration fee of \$20.00 per child (no more than \$50 per family) and will include intensive training in musical and theatrical skills. The weekly sessions will begin Saturday, January 26 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and will culminate in a musical revue on Friday, March 1st at 7:30 p.m. and Saturday, March 2nd at 11 a.m, which will be open to the public.

Participants can register by contacting the church office at 419-874-4346 or by visiting: <https://vbspro.events/p/events/singingforthestage>



from
Omaldo

Cantor

operez@zoarlutheran.com

Dear Friends,

The Feast of Epiphany is one of those Christian celebrations that do not get much airtime here in the States. However, for the rest of the world, this Holyday is a richly layered festival in which Christians remember the revelation of Christ's divinity to the Gentiles.

Here at Zoar, we are planning to mark January 6 in a celebratory way: get a hold of your calendars because, on January 6, Zoar will commemorate the Feast by joining Christians around the world during our regular worship.

We will also hold a Vespers service at three p.m.. Featuring a variety of music, this Choral Vespers will feature as its musical centerpiece J. S. Bach's Cantata BWV 65, *Sie werden aus Saba alle kommen* (They will all come forth out of Sheba), a joyful musical tour de force for choir, soloists, and orchestra, which Bach composed for the Thomaskirche Choir in the year 1724. The free-will offering will benefit Zoar's music ministry. There will be a reception following the service.



DECEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

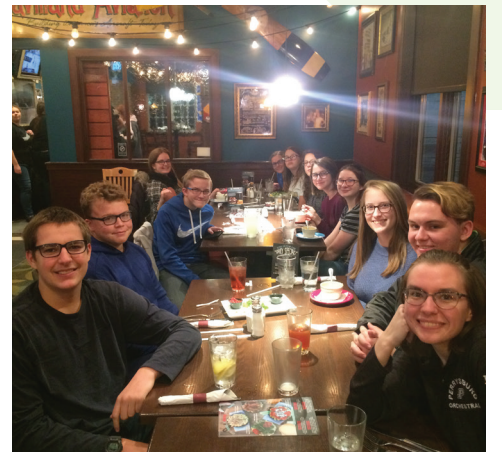
ADVENT WORKSHOP

Sunday, December 2nd Zoar held its annual Advent Workshop. This year families worked together to make Advent Jars of Kindness. Instead of the traditional Advent Calendar, this Advent Kindness Jar encouraged Zoar families to spread the love and hope of the Christmas season by sharing a different act of kindness each day leading up to Christ's birth. Thank you to all who made this event a great success!



LOCK OUT / IN

Fourteen Zoar Youth and friends came together to enjoy the Lock Out/Lock-In on November 30th. The youth who attended had a fabulous time getting to know and serve dinner to our friends at Vision Kitchen in Toledo, sharing a meal together (without cell phones), a movie at the local theater, late night camp style worship, prayer stations and MORE! It was a fantastic evening and we can't wait to do it all again



JANUARY SCHEDULE

January 6TH 3 PM: HS Youth are encouraged to attend the Epiphany Bach Vespers

January 13TH 4 - 6 PM: Service Sunday

January 20TH 12 - 2 PM: Snow Adventure

January 27TH: No Youth Group- Amanda will be attending the ELCA Extravaganza!

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SERVICE SUNDAY

JANUARY 13TH 4 - 6 PM

Join us this month in creating items and writing letters to youth in Guatemala sponsored by SewHope. Do you speak Spanish? We could use your skills!

All 5th -12th Grade youth are welcome to join us.

MLK WEEKEND SNOW ADVENTURE

JANUARY 20TH 12 - 2 PM

Save the date! Looking for something to do during your LONG weekend in January?

Join us after worship in sledding at Sidecut Metropark. Please RSVP to Amanda by January 13th!



LOOKING AHEAD TO FEBRUARY

FEBRUARY 3RD SUPER BOWL SUNDAY

Join us for Super Bowl Sunday! Football, games, food, silly commercials and MORE!

If you are willing host this event please contact Amanda: arich@zoarlutheran.com



from

Amanda

Director of Youth Ministries

arich@zoarlutheran.com

Dear Friends,

Happy New Year! I hope that you all had a very blessed Christmas with your family and friends.

As I reflect on 2018, one of the things that keeps showing up to me is the blessing of Zoar. I am so grateful for my position at Zoar, the people I have met, served alongside and our wonderful youth and families. I am so blessed and grateful to be working for the church and serving in a congregation that seeks out every opportunity to love as Jesus did.

The start of the new year brings us so much to look forward too! I can't wait to see what 2019 has in store for our ministries here at Zoar and for all of our youth. High School Youth Group will kick off the year by attending the Epiphany Bach Vespers Service here at Zoar, followed by making creations for our friends in Guatemala in conjunction with the ministry of SewHope and on Third Sunday we will be going sledding at Sidecut Metropark! I can't wait to spend time with you all and your families!

Blessings,
Amanda Rich



from
Pastor Mike
Community Pastor
pastormike@zoarlutheran.com

One of the first things Jesus did in ministry was to form a small group. He had the “twelve”: Peter, James, John, Andrew, Nathanael, James the Younger, Judas, Thaddeus, Matthew, Philip, Simon the Zealot, and Thomas. Then there were the women disciples in his inner circle: Mary, Martha, Joana, Mary Magdalene, Susanna, and Salome. Jesus moved among the crowds and large-scale events, to be sure. But the majority of his time was spent in the intimacy of a small group. This was key to his spiritual focus. These men and women became a life line for him. In Jesus’s last recorded prayer, he says that they were God’s gifts to him. God has gifts to give you, too. People gifts. We want to help surround you with people who help your life become all that God intends for it.



LIVING THE GIFTS

MAJORITY OF WORSHIPERS IN A GROUP

Jesus established a small group with twelve seemingly unqualified and unprepared men of diverse backgrounds, and yet it worked because Jesus **Gathered** the group in relationship so that they would **Grow** in faith through fellowship and learning from the Master, and finally they would **Give** the Good News of crucified and risen Jesus Christ to the world. Gather, Grow, and Give—that is what Zoar small groups are all about.

Zoar currently has 25 small groups with about 250 members. Some of those groups are focused on recreation or a specific topic. However, the majority of the groups are what we call either Christ Care Groups or Date Night Groups.





Small Groups

Perfect fit in one of our small groups.

WE'VE GOT A GROUP FOR YOU

Seventeen of the twenty-five small groups are Christ Care groups. These are groups that meet to discuss significant, meaningful themes while maintaining a strong spiritual engagement among the members of the group. These groups of 6 to 12 gather (generally in homes) to develop friendships. As they meet regularly, they grow together in faith and understanding through materials that challenge and encourage that faith and understanding. Finally, as they are led, they give of themselves as the group or individuals in response to what Jesus has done for them.

SMALL GROUPS

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Christ Care Groups | 12. Rachel Circle |
| 2. Parent of Young Children | 13. Naomi Circle |
| 3. Parents of Young Adult Children | 14. Ruth Circle |
| 4. Parents of Tweens | 15. Men's Breakfast |
| 5. Wednesday Morning Periscope Study | 16. Pickleball |
| 6. Men's Disciples | 17. Bowling |
| 7. Faith Science and Technology | 18. Bridge |
| 8. Popcorn Gang | 19. Golf |
| 9. Digging Deeper | 20. Hunting & Fishing |
| 10. The Gathering | 21. The Struggle is Real |
| 11. Sunday Forum | |

WANT TO KNOW MORE?


Christ Care Potluck
February 17TH
12 PM - 2 PM

Do you want to know more about our groups? Do you have stories of Christ Care groups to share? Do you want to celebrate the impact of Christ Care groups? Join the Christ Care team for a potluck luncheon celebration February 17 following late service. All current Christ Care group members are invited. We also encourage anyone who is interested in learning more about Christ Care groups and/or joining a group to come enjoy the food and fellowship while learning more about Christ Care groups.

GATHER/GROW/GIVE

REUNITED FAMILIES

LUTHERANS AND CATHOLICS WORK TOGETHER



Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Office of Migration and Refugee Services (USCCB/MRS) released a report recently entitled *Serving Separated and Reunited Families: Lessons Learned and the Way Forward to Promote Family Unity*. The report documents the work of Lutheran and Catholic agencies who assisted the Administration with reuniting separated families during the month of July and provides recommendations for a more humane way forward. "I am tremendously proud of how quickly LIRS, USCCB/MRS, and our Lutheran and Catholic partners nationwide, stepped up to provide support for families during this time of crisis," said Kay Bellor, Vice President of Programs for LIRS. "As we have been for decades, communities of faith were there, poised and ready, to love and serve our neighbors in need. It is our deep hope that the lessons learned from this time in our history will prevent the cruel separation of children from their parents from happening again." In July 2018, LIRS and USCCB/MRS assisted over 1200 families who were reunified after being separated under the Administration's "Zero Tolerance" policy. The report highlights the work that was undertaken by Lutheran and Catholic partners on the ground, and gives a unique data point regarding the separated and reunited families. The report, along with resources and information about family separation, are available on the LIRS website at www.lirs.org/childrens-issues.

THE BOOK OF JUDGES

BEGINNING JANUARY 6TH

The Old Testament book of Judges introduces the story of Israel in the land of Canaan. It highlights how rapidly Israel fell into religious, military and social crisis, necessitating a new societal structure: the Judean monarchy. The book features a sequence of stories featuring unlikely, morally ambiguous, but charismatic heroes. Over the course of the narrative oppression grows, saviors are less effective, and the book ends in a bloody civil war. The violence and questionable behavior of Israel and its Judges may lead readers to ask, "What's a nasty book like this doing in the Bible?"

Beginning Sunday January 6th, Dr. Donna Laird will lead an eight-week Sunday morning exploration of this problematic book. In the process we will consider how this book of self-critique about a people that lost its way might speak to our own community and society. Class will meet at 9:45 in the Conference Room.

WAYS TO GIVE

NEW -TEXT TO GIVE OPTION

Zoar Lutheran offers a variety of opportunities to give in support of the ministries that touch and transform the lives of God's people in our local community and around the world. Tithes, donations and offerings can be made online, through text or during worship.

Give Online

Using the secure, online payment platform, you can set up a recurring payment or give a one-time donation. You do not have to be a member of Zoar Lutheran to make a donation. Contact the church office with any additional questions about how you can financially support Zoar Lutheran. Online giving is available at: ZoarLutheran.com/give-financially/

Text to Give - NEW

Giving to the church via a text message is fast, easy and versatile. You can make a weekly offering or respond to a specific need in seconds. Zoar's Text to Give number is 330-427-3506. A step by step guide on text to give is available at: ZoarLutheran.com/give-financially/

Give by Cash or Check

If you wish to present your gifts and offerings in person, we offer a "passing of the plate" during worship services. To learn more about when and where we meet see our worship section of the website. If you would prefer to send your contributions by mail, you may do so by making your check payable to "Zoar Lutheran Church" and mailing it to:

Zoar Lutheran Church
314 East Indiana Avenue
Perrysburg, Ohio 43551



MEET A MEMBER

BETH KROLAK

Beth and her husband Vince and children PJ and Sonia have been members at Zoar for 15 years. Beth has served as a member on Call Committee and Worship Committee, Sunday School teacher and musician over the years, this past year serving as Vice President of Church Council.

She has been the District Technology Coordinator at Bowling Green City Schools for 21 years and previously taught Band, Music and Technology for 8 years at Patrick Henry Schools. While teaching at Patrick Henry, she also served as the Choir Director at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Deshler. Beth holds Bachelors and Graduate degrees in Education from Bowling Green State University. In her free time, Beth is a soccer enthusiast, playing in womens' soccer leagues and refereeing youth and high school soccer games.

Z O A R C A L E N D A R O F E V E N T S H I G H L I G H T S

JANUARY // 2019

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2 Lifetouch Photos Donald Coffey Birthday	3 Lifetouch Photos	4 Zoar Book Club	5
6 Epiphany Bach Vespers	7 Lester Meier Birthday	8	9 Confirmation Begins Again	10	11	12
13 Service Sunday	14 Ramona Abke Birthday	15	16	17	18	19 Singing for the Stage
20 Snow Adventure Lois Ann Hill Birthday	21	22	23	24	25 Kitchen of Hope Mearl Finch Birthday	26 Singing for the Stage Blood Drive
27 No Youth Group Donald Creps Birthday Paul Meyerholtz Birthday	28 Marcelene Davis Birthday	29 Miriam Fansler Birthday	30	31		

for a complete list of events, please visit
zoarlutheran.com/calendar

ZOAR STAFF

Senior Pastor: Rev. Dr. Tim Philabaum
 Community Pastor: Rev. Dr. Mike Brown

Cantor: Omaldo Perez
 Director of Youth Ministry: Amanda Rich
 Director of Communications: Mollie Rauscher

Administrative Manager: Dale Nordahl
 Secretary: Suzanne DeLaney
 Custodian: Paul Cannon

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Member SIPC

Would you like to place a birthday announcement or congratulatory message in the Zoar monthly newsletter?

Contact Mollie at communications@zoarlutheran.com for pricing and availability.

Deadline is the 5th of the preceding month!



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CURRENT RESIDENT OR

Rev. Dr. Tim Philabaum, Senior Pastor
Rev. Dr. Mike Brown, Community Pastor

Worship times:
6 PM Saturday,
7:15, 8:30 & 11 AM Sunday

Sunday School for all ages at 9:45 AM

Be
AmaZed!



www.zoarlutheran.com



Seek the Lord and his
strength, seek his presence
continually. Remember the
wonderful works he has
done, his miracles, and the
judgments he uttered.
1 Chronicles 16:11-12