

Amaz^{ing}!News

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

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ADVENT GLADNESS AND CHRISTMASTIDINGS

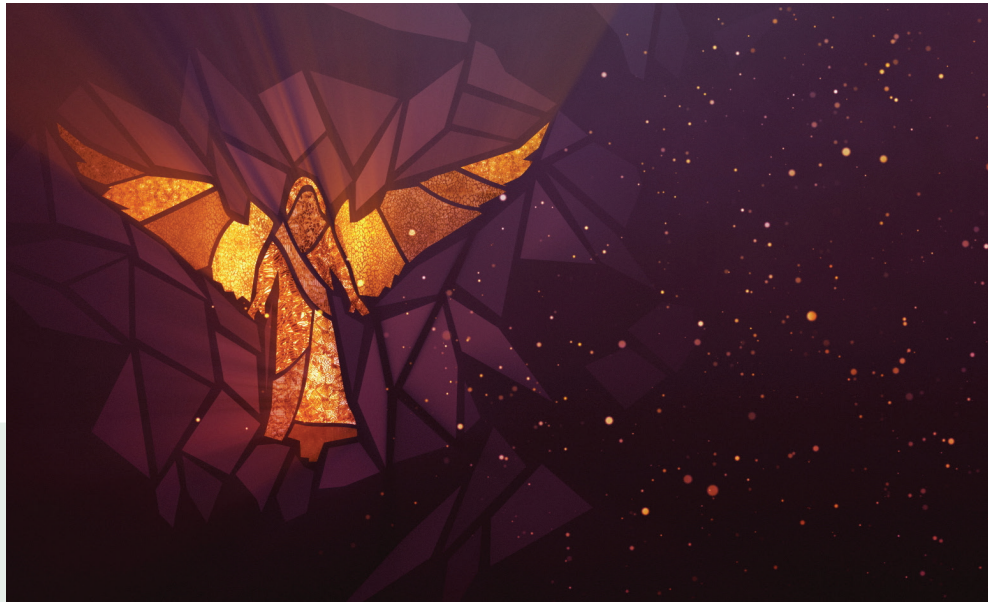
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13TH 7:30 PM

Come and join the spirit of the season with the musical ensembles of Zoar! December 13TH at 7:30 PM in *Advent Gladness and Christmas Tidings*. We will bring musical tidings from three continents and lots of Christmas cheer. Laufft ihr Hirten allzugleich, (Come, Ye Shepherds to the Light), written by Austrian composer Johann Michael Haydn, will be our main fare, along with Georg Philipp Telemann's advent cantata Hosianna dem Sohne Davids (Hosanna, Thou Son of David). Advent and Christmas music from many traditions will fill the sanctuary on this night of light and charm, brought under the direction of Omaldo Perez.





from
Pastor Tim
Senior Pastor
pastortim@zoarlutheran.com



WAITING

I am so glad that we have come to the month of December. Of course, I love the cold, the wind, the snow that is to come. But it's more than that.

You know what the end of the month brings: God, in all of God's glory and love entered human flesh, became a baby, and was laid in a feeding trough. His dear mother and his stepfather were there to keep him safe, and from out in the field shepherds came to worship. With all the hype of Christmas, the trimmings and the trappings, the songs and the stories, the foods and the families, it's sometimes hard to remember that all of this is centered on The Babe, the Gift of Love, the One who has come for us and all creation.

But before this most sacred night comes a month of waiting. Like sitting in a Doctor's office, waiting. Like waiting at a red light, knowing it will soon turn green. Like waiting for tomorrow. Like waiting after surgery to be able to walk. Like waiting the nine months for a baby to be born.

Waiting is not the easiest thing to do. We like to have our needs met when we are ready, and on our schedule. But, as we know, God's schedule is different than ours. So, we wait.

Advent brings us into the promise of Christmas. We wait as Mary did for the joy of Jesus' birth. We wait to sing some of the Christmas Carols until we are closer to Christmas. We wait to see what God has in store for us now

This Advent-waiting is not just sitting around, but it is a waiting full of prayer, of loving deeds, of open-eyes expecting to see God, of times of grace and forgiveness. Advent calls us to wait for God, knowing that God is already with us, full of love, peace, and joy. And we wait, knowing that one day Jesus will return, and all the pain of the world will be gone, all the death in the world will be gone, all the power that hurts people will be gone. Only joy forever! Alleluia!

I'm so glad that we have come to the month of December. May this one be full of joy and expectation for you as you wait in the hands of the God who holds you in love!

WORSHIP IN DECEMBER



The season of Advent in the year of Matthew reminds us Christians of the exciting world-disrupting nature of the Kingdom of Heaven. More urgently than at any other time of the year, this season points toward imminent change, because, just like in a Sci-Fi blockbuster movie, the dimension we call the Kingdom of God is forcefully invading and taking over this reality. Here is a short synopsis based on Gail Ramshaw's writings.

Advent I

In today's readings, Jesus commands his followers not to drop out of the world, but to be on the lookout for him in it. They are designed to help turn us on to the excitement and anticipation of God's reign in our lives and tune in to the infinite opportunities we have to participate in it. In other words, they want to wake us up!

Advent II

John the Baptist's call to repentance in preparation of Jesus' arrival carries a challenge for us to rid ourselves of everything that obstructs our view. His proclamation is filled with images of cleansing: straightening paths, cutting down useless trees, and burning away the chaff. John's baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins means cleansing as well as a changing of the mind, a turning toward Jesus so that one's whole self is pointed toward the Lord of this world and eternity.

Advent III

In this season of Advent, we stand in the discomfiting quiet of waiting for the salvation of the Lord while simultaneously seeing that very salvation breaking into the world around us, just as Jesus proclaimed back then. We reaffirm the promised of a coming of a savior is both realized and still to come. Yes, Jesus is here among us, bringing peace and reconciliation. But we wait for the day when he will make all things new. The day is here, and yet we wait while we sing, "Come, Lord Jesus."

Advent IV

The texts for the fourth Sunday of Advent, apart from simultaneously establishing and disrupting traditional patriarchal expectations, invite us to explore the name "Emmanuel," "God with us." Never is God so with us as in Jesus of Nazareth. Here is God-made-flesh, and in his very name, the Son of God proclaims just how with us and for us, God really is.



from Omaldo Cantor

operez@zoarlutheran.com

I would like to take this moment to ask you to rally: let's not dilly-dally, we are going to the mountain and not staying in the valley! As we come to the end of the year, I'd like you all to join in the festive atmosphere. At Zoar Lutheran there is another concert at hand, but this time, when it comes story-telling, we will revisit the Holy Land. *Advent Gladness and Christmas Tidings* is the name of the event, and while December 13th is the date, be not afraid, for on this Friday we will not meditate on goblins and specters, but associate with angels, shepherds, a Savior and his manger.

For this concert, as it is our tradition, music old and new will be our charter. But always delightful is the pattern our music director has in mind when it comes to this matter. So, "Fear not", as the Angel Gabriel once said to Mary, come hither, and in our prayer and in our praise we will be less solitary. Do this, and we will refresh our spirits in a manner most salutary.

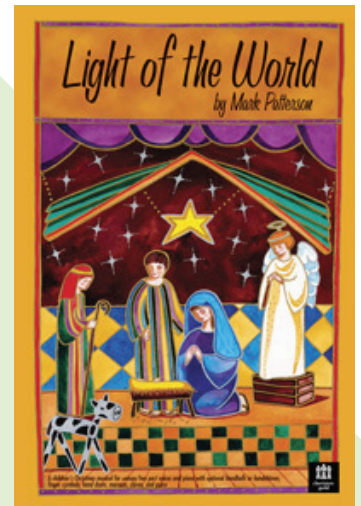


2019 CHRISTMAS ACTIVITIES

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15 11 AM WORSHIP

It is that time of the year when the young people of Zoar are busy getting ready to proclaim the Good News: God sent a Savior! On Sunday, December 15, at 11 AM we will hear *Light of the World*, written by Mark Patterson, a beautifully-crafted musical that combines original songs and familiar carols from around the world. Through narration and song, we will hear about how Jesus came to be the Light of the World over 2,000 years ago. Rehearsals will be Sundays during the Sunday School hour with an additional rehearsal on December 14 from 9 AM - 12 PM



CHRISTMAS CAROLING

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15 12 PM

Join Amanda, Omaldo and the Zoar Youth Groups in caroling in our community. We will be singing for local nursing homes and other friends of Zoar. Grab your Santa hat or reindeer ears and join us in spreading the JOY of the holiday season! ALL ARE WELCOME! A pizza lunch will be provided! Please RSVP to Amanda by December 13TH if you plan to attend.



DECEMBER SCHEDULE

December 1ST: Advent Workshop: Patience & Prayer **9:45 AM - 10:45 AM**
12:15 PM - 1:15 PM

December 8TH: HS Youth Group: Ice Skating @BGSU **Time: TBA**
Service Sunday: Perrysburg Holiday Parade and
Christmas Present Project **Time: TBA**

December 14TH: Christmas Program Rehearsal **9 AM - 12 PM**

December 15TH: Christmas Program **11 AM Worship**
Pizza Lunch and Caroling **12 PM**



TRUNK OR TREAT, THANKYOU!

A HUGE thank you goes out to the many volunteers who helped to make this year's Trunk or Treat event an AMAZING success! Thank you to all who gave their time in decorating, serving food, shopping, leading games, donating candy and/or trunks and for staying to help clean up! This year we had just under 300 people join us for our event! We can't wait to do it all again next year.

ADVENT WORKSHOP: PATIENCE AND PRAYER

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1ST
9:45 AM - 10:45 AM & 12:15 - 1:15 PM

Children of ALL AGES are invited to join us for Advent Workshop, December 1st 9:45AM - 10:45AM and/or 12:15PM - 1:15PM. This year's event will be a compilation prayer practices designed for you- the congregation, friends and families to explore, reflect and share. Bring your friends and families and join us for a time of hands on prayer, exploration and reflection as we await the birth of Jesus.

SERVICE SUNDAY SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8TH TIME: TBA

This month's Service Sunday falls on the same day as the Perrysburg Holiday Parade. 5TH - 12TH graders are invited to join us for the parade followed by hot chocolate and continuing our Christmas Present Project for our friends at Leading Families Home in Toledo.



LOOKING AHEAD TO JANUARY EPIPHANY PARTY

SUNDAY, JANUARY 5TH 4 - 6 PM

High School Youth are invited to attend our Youth Epiphany Party! Bring a gift that is \$5 or less for our gift exchange and come enjoy games, hot chocolate and fellowship.



from
Amanda
Director of Youth Ministries
arich@zoarlutheran.com

Dear Friends,

With the year coming to an end, I would like to extend a HUGE thank you to all of the people who lent their time to support, encourage, accompany and lead our youth in 2019. We have done AMAZING things together this year from kicking off our Monthly Mingle Service Sundays to climbing mountains during our Adventure Trip at Lutherock and by sharing our gifts with others during this holiday season and throughout the year.

Looking ahead to 2020 the opportunities continue! We will be continuing our Monthly Mingle Service Sundays, we will be taking our first Service Trip (in several years) to Lexington, South Carolina through Next Step Ministries, we will have our second annual Zoar Youth and Family Week of Service and SO MUCH MORE! I can't wait to join in these activities with each of you!

During this advent season, as we await the upcoming birth of our Lord Jesus, I invite you to reflect on your year, celebrate your successes as we look forward to another exciting year in the life of the church!

Blessings,
Amanda Rich

CHRISTMAS

AT ZO

Advent and Christmas Season is everyone's favorite time of year. The festive activities, the time spent with family, the food and the beautiful white snow all in celebration of the greatest gift. Our Savior.

At Zoar the month of December is filled with celebrations. Advent I begins on the weekend of November 30 and December 1 with a special Advent Workshop on Sunday at 9:45 AM and/or 12:15 PM. More information about the Advent Workshop can be found on Page 5 of this newsletter.

Advent II begins December 7 and 8 with a special Christmas concert on Friday, December 13 at 7:30 PM. *Advent Gladness and Christmas Tidings* will bring musical tidings from three continents and lots of Christmas cheer.

December 14 and 15 begins Advent III and this weekend is jam packed with activities for every age! On Sunday, at the 11 AM our littlest Lutherans will produce our Sunday School Christmas Program *Light of the World*. These kids have been practicing so hard and are cute as can be, this performance will certainly put you in a festive mood.

Continuing on Sunday, December 15 at 12:15 PM join Amanda, Omaldo and the Zoar Youth Groups in caroling in our community. Visit Page 4 of the newsletter to learn more about this festive activity!

Advent IV is on December 21 and 22 with no Sunday School. This Sunday afternoon join us for the Blue Christmas worship at 2 PM. Not everyone is feeling holly and jolly for the Christmas holidays. Dealing with the death of a loved one, facing life after divorce or separation, coping with the loss of a job, living with cancer or some other disease, and a number of other situations make parties and celebrating painful for many people in our congregation and community. Join us as we hear scripture and reflection, sing songs that help hearts to heal, and light candles to remember, to remind God of our need, and to reflect.

Finally we reach Christmas, the long anticipated birth of Jesus Christ. Whether this is your first Christmas season at Zoar or your fiftieth you may be wondering what to expect. This year we will host four Christmas worship services all complete with carols, candles, and Communion.

ZOAR

Join us at 2, 4, 8:30 or 11 PM for Christmas worship. 2 and 4 PM will be our family worship times and each service will feature beautiful musical performances. At the 2 PM worship Cantorei Jr. Choir, our childrens choir, will be sure to delight. At 8:30 PM music will include a brass ensemble and Zoar's Chancel Choir. At 11 PM a brass ensemble, Zoar's Chancel Choir, and Zoar's Agape Bells will be featured.

No matter which service you attend (or attend all if you are really in the Christmas mood) you will hear the most important story of all. The story of our Savior's birth. We will read from Luke 2 and listen to Mary and Joseph story of their trip to Bethlehem and the birth of their son. We will celebrate the birth of a King.

As we approach the Advent and Christmas seasons perhaps God is putting certain people on your heart. Someone who is looking for a church home, someone who has had a hard year, someone who has not come to know Jesus yet. Christmas is the perfect time of year to invite those people to worship. Every weekend in December there will be invite cards available with the greeters and in the gathering space. Grab a couple and

pass them out to neighbors, friends, coworkers and loved ones. Sometimes all people need is an invitation and a simple card asking them to join you at Zoar for Christmas can be the start of a life changing relationship between them and Jesus. What a wonderful gift to give.

If you are unsure about inviting people to worship at Christmas here are some tips! First, begin with prayer. Ask God to reveal specific people you should invite to Zoar for Christmas. Pray that God will soften their hearts so that the invitation will be accepted. Second, tell them what you enjoy about the service. Do you enjoy the music? The candles? The message? Let your friends know your favorite part of Christmas at Zoar. Be clear about the time and place. Our invite cards are great for this! Keep a couple in your purse or car. Then you can hand them out and let your friends know which service you will be attending.

We cannot wait to see you at Zoar this Christmas.

GATHER/GROW/GIVE

FOUR NEW WEBSITE FEATURES

AND HOW TO USE THEM

I love living in an age where everything I need is at my fingertips. What I don't love, however, is navigating through so much information that my head spins. With so much to read, I often don't know where to start! It's like how I secretly feel about warehouse stores. Sure, I have a membership, but I still find it a bit overwhelming. I mean, the only thing more daunting than 56 rolls of toilet paper is 56 pallets of toilet paper stacked from floor to ceiling. So, when I learned that Zoar was launching four new components to its web site to help me better connect with the church rather than bombard me with information, I knew I had to check them out. These four new web site features will help you and I better connect to the people and events at Zoar, and they're easy to use!

Calendar

Wondering what's going on at Zoar on a certain day? Click on the day and see a list. Click on each individual event for the important details. It's that easy. Use the search bar to type in the name of the specific event you're looking for. Can't remember the name of that event your kids have, or for that matter the time or day? No worries, the calendar's got you. Click on "Filter Events", choose Youth from the Event Type menu, and the calendar will show you the available options. Or, want to know what music events are happening throughout the year so you can invite your family and friends? You can also use the Filter Events feature to search for all activities of a certain type, including music and many others. <http://www.zoarlutheran.com/calendar/>

Prayer Wall

What better way to connect with your sisters and brothers in Christ than through the power of prayer? Whether you're in need of prayer or wanting to lift others up, the prayer wall can help. Add your prayer request to the wall and know that you will be prayed for by Zoar staff and fellow members. You can control who sees your prayer request by choosing to share it publicly, anonymously, or only with Zoar Staff. You can choose to be notified when someone prays for your request. You can remove your prayer request at any time and also update those who are praying if your request is answered. You can also use the prayer wall to help guide you through your personal prayer time. It will give you a list of all the current prayer requests and the opportunity to send a message to someone saying that you prayed for them. <http://www.zoarlutheran.com/prayer-wall/>

Sermon Organizer

Missed church last week but still want to hear the message? Hop on over to the sermon organizer page and start listening on demand. Really loved something Pastor Tim said in a sermon months ago but can't remember what it was? You can browse by speaker, month or sermon series to find what you're looking for. In a funk and need a sermon about finding Jesus even on the bad days? You can even search sermons by topic or book of the Bible to find the inspiration you're needing. <http://www.zoarlutheran.com/watch-sermons/>

Groups Engine

Whether you attended Explore Zoar in September or just heard about it, there are over 55 ministry groups at Zoar, and there's a place for you. The groups engine can help you navigate the task of finding the right fit. You can view a list of all Zoar groups, or conduct a specific search to help you find one that meets your needs. For example, maybe, like me, you just sent your youngest off to preschool and find that you have some available time to connect and serve on weekday mornings. Simply go to the groups page and click on Search Colossians 4:2 reads, "Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with thanksgiving." Available Groups. You can specify that you're looking for a service group that meets during the morning hours, and it will generate a list of possible options. From there, you can read about each option and contact the group leader for more information. So, never fear, whether you need to know what's happening, when it's happening, what you missed, what you need to be reminded of, or how to pray for your church community, Zoar's new web site features have it all. Start using them today! <http://www.zoarlutheran.com/groups/>

- Article by Rachel Abke

HELP FOR SPREAD CHRISTMAS CHEER

Feed Our Families is hosting our fourth annual Christmas distribution Saturday, December 14, 2019. We will invite 36 families with a total of 94 children, which we serve during our summer distribution. Each family will be given a bag of groceries, personal items and a gift card for each child. In addition, the parents are able to shop for additional items for their school age children.

We are asking for your help in collecting the following items:

Items for School Aged Children:

- Toys
- Games
- Puzzles
- Books
- Items for Outdoor Play (sleds, balls, etc.)

Items for Teens:

- Earbuds
- Wireless Speakers
- Stainless Steel water bottles
- Fleece Throws

Items for Parents:

- Purses/Wallets
- Jewelry
- Tools
- Picture Frames
- Car accessories

Please place your items in the marked bin in the Gathering Space by Wednesday, December 11. If you have any additional questions, feel free to contact Tracy Rickman at 419-206-7927 or Cynthia Blubaugh at 419-376-1851.

ADVENT PRAYER WALL

During the 24 days of Advent this year you will be encouraged to enter with the Zoar community into prayer. Each day will have a theme for which to pray. That theme will be listed on the Zoar website and Facebook page, and emailed out to you. We ask that you sign on to the Zoar Webpage to www.zoarlutheran.com/advent-prayer-wall/ to sign up to pray each day. Blessings on this time of Advent-prayer!

December

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Nurses/Doctors/Technicians | 13. The marginalized and cast-out |
| 2. Leaders in our government | 14. Children & parents |
| 3. The gift of creation | 15. Those who serve in our Armed Forces |
| 4. Teachers and school workers | 16. This community |
| 5. Those who are poor | 17. Our homebound members |
| 6. Those who labor | 18. those who are members of other faiths |
| 7. First responders | 19. those who are grieving |
| 8. the Neighbor next door | 20. Cure for diseases |
| 9. Clergy and missionaries | 21. The Schools |
| 10. Those who are depressed | 22. Those who do not believe in God |
| 11. All Churches in Jesus | 23. Peace |
| 12. Those who are mentally & physically sick | 24. The presence of Jesus |



from
Pastor Cindy
Interim Associate Pastor
pastorcindy@zoarlutheran.com

Come and worship, come and worship, worship, Christ the newborn king.

These words are from the hymn "Angels, from the Realms of Glory." This is what do here at Zoar on Christmas Eve at our 2, 4, 8:30 and 11 PM services...we show our gratitude for God's most precious gift to us, our Savior Jesus Christ born on Christmas day. Invite others to join us and participate in holy worship. At home there's many wonderful things to do as we prepare for Christmas. We decorate, send cards, bake delicious cookies, shop for gifts and gather with family and friends to celebrate the season.

At church we prepare during the season of Advent for the coming of the Lord. We attend the children's Christmas program held on December 15TH. Their JOY is contagious! We also serve our community by providing food and gifts for folks in need. Keep alert for the opportunities you will have to share the blessings God has given you with others.

Jesus is the Reason for the Season. Merry Christmas!

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

DECEMBER // 2019

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Advent I Worship Advent Workshop	2 Christmas Decorating	3 Piece Corps Pickleball Liz Kaczar Birthday	4 Bible Study	5 Men's Breakfast Men's Cards Bible Study Chancel Choir	6 Book Club Richard Williams Birthday	7 Advent II Worship
8 Advent II Worship Service Sunday	9 Ruth Circle Popcorn Gang	10 Pickleball	11 Bible Study Rachel Circle	12 Men's Cards Chancel Choir	13 Kitchen of Hope Solo Again Advent Gladness and Christmas Tidings	14 Christmas Program Rehearsal Faith Science & Technology Advent III Worship
15 Advent III Worship Christmas Program Caroling	16	17 Piece Corps Pickleball	18 Bible Study Esther Speck Birthday	19 Men's Cards Bible Study Chancel Choir	20	21 Prayer Partners Advent IV Worship
22 Advent IV Worship Blue Christmas	23 Yarns of Love	24 Christmas Eve Worship Betty Creps Birthday	25 Office Closed	26 Office Closed	27 Office Closed	28 Worship Ann Lieder Birthday
29 Worship Jane St. John Birthday	30 Office Closed	31 Office Closed				

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

ZOAR STAFF

Senior Pastor: Rev. Dr. Tim Philabaum
 Interim Associate Pastor: Rev. Cindy Ritter

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

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

WE WISHTO THANK OUR SPONSORS

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.

THIS CHRISTMAS,
*there is a place
for you here*

**ST. PAUL'S
LUTHERAN CHURCH**
428 N. Erie Street in Downtown Toledo



HeART Gallery Presents
NATIVITY
festival
for unto us a child is born

THURSDAY December 19 12-8pm	FRIDAY December 20 12-8pm	SATURDAY December 21 12-4pm
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Festival opening multimedia program
THE COLORS OF CHRISTMAS
Thursday, December 19 9:30am

•view 100+ nativities • themed trees • live music • lunch served 11:30am
Gina Buzzelli, violin Tom Ritter, bass Will Kinsey, drums . Kate Philabaum, keys
reservations to kate@stpaulstoledo.org



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Rev. Dr. Tim Philabaum, Senior Pastor
Rev. Cindy Ritter, Interim Associate Pastor

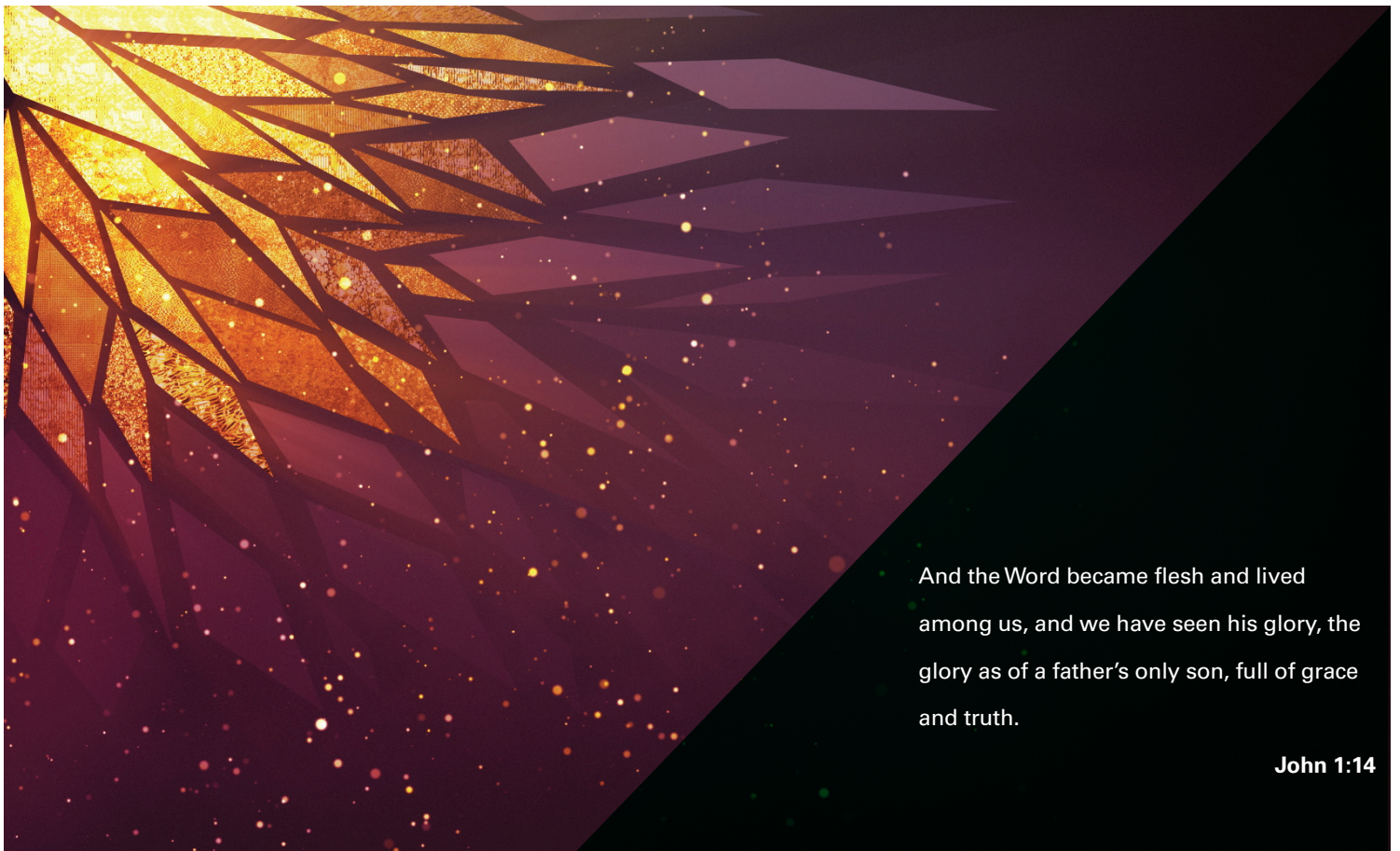
Worship times:
6 PM Saturday,
7:15, 8:30 & 11 AM Sunday

Sunday School for all ages at 9:45 AM

Be
AmaZed!



www.zoarlutheran.com



And the Word became flesh and lived
among us, and we have seen his glory, the
glory as of a father's only son, full of grace
and truth.

John 1:14