

# Amaz<sup>ing</sup>!News

JULY // 2021



A MONTHLY PUBLICATION FROM ZOAR LUTHERAN CHURCH | [WWW.ZOARLUTHERAN.COM](http://WWW.ZOARLUTHERAN.COM)

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### ***“We belong to God”***

BY EMMY KEGLER

How do you deal with your critics?

We’ve all got them—family, friends, co-workers, bosses, customers, next-door neighbors, internet strangers. Life with other humans inevitably involves conflict, debate and even division.

In our lectionary readings this June and July, we learn of Paul’s work in Corinth and those who opposed it. In his second letter to the Corinthian church, Paul offers a fierce defense of his ministry among them. Men have called into question his ministry, his missed visit, his request for financial support for other Christian communities and even his teachings.

While Paul fiercely defends his ministry, his theme throughout the letter isn’t his competence in debate but the radical idea of *power revealed in weakness*. He focuses not on his skill as a minister but on his and his fellow preachers’ suffering as they’ve worked for the gospel.

When our Christian character is challenged, we might want to point to our qualifications (and Paul certainly

does that too). Nevertheless, at his best, Paul remembers who the gospel is about and pulls his authority from Jesus.

Building up the church isn’t about us—how much we give, how hard we work, how long we’ve been here. It’s about the promise of new creation. In Jesus, our successes are less important than the joy of knowing our past mistakes are forgiven. In Jesus, our personal skills and spiritual résumé are nothing compared to our reconciliation with God.

Paul doesn’t accept an invitation to a debate. He tells his story, including the suffering and pain, because, even though not every chapter is finished, he already knows the ending: “an eternal weight of glory, beyond all measure.” Paul refuses to let his suffering or his critics suggest that his work has been in vain. He knows to whom he belongs: not to his past, his mistakes or his detractors but to God.

*This article first appeared at [livinglutheran.org](http://livinglutheran.org) on June 21, 2021. Reprinted with permission. © ELCA*



from  
**Pastor Tim**

**Senior Pastor**

[pastortim@zoarlutheran.com](mailto:pastortim@zoarlutheran.com)

# Lead.



Brothers and sisters, we are already into July. The months are going by so quickly! When I look over my years at Zoar I am reminded of St. Paul's comment to the Philippians, "I thank my God every time I remember, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you." What a gift you have been to me and to my family!

July brings its own gifts and blessings – we celebrate the joy of this land, imperfect yet boun-tiful; we revel in the depth of the summer, replete with warmth, picnics, vacations, family; and this year July is another month of "coming out" of pandemic.

But the gifts of being with you, the good people of Zoar - in the midst of baptisms, hospital visits, weddings, confirmations, worship services, fellowship, funerals, dinners, yea even committee meetings - have been a delight. I am honored, and I retire full of gratitude!

When I retire, September 5, I will be pleased to know that not only is Zoar in God's amaZing hands (as we have always been!), but also in the hands of Pastor Paul Reichert. Zoar will have the honor of having him serve as Pastor in this gracious and awesome congregation. I will no longer be serving as Pastor to and with you, even though I will be in the community for a while. The Covenant of Separation, created by the ELCA and which I will sign states:

*"For the congregation, it is important to establish restrictions that Pastor Philabaum will not participate in any weddings, funerals, or baptisms, nor engage in any hospital or pastoral visitation at any time after his official resignation date."*

I will continue to hold you in prayer and thanksgiving. I will also rejoice in Pastor Paul's ministry in your midst!

So, what does God have in store for Zoar in the future? How will Zoar come out of Covid, ready for gathered worship, for delightful fellowship, for ministry and mission in the name of Jesus? That future is yet in front of all of us. But I am convinced that the God who has brought us to this place will continue to bless and guide Zoar in all the years ahead. Not only as a "refuge," but as a community in which Jesus is glorified.

Blessings, people of Zoar!

**Pastor Tim**





from  
**Pastor Paul**  
Pastor  
pastorpaul@zoarlutheran.com

## **“How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?” Psalm 13:1-2**

For nearly a year and a half, we have been dealing with the Covid-19 Pandemic. And for the first time in a hundred years, churches all over the country (and the world) shut their doors to in-person worship, education, service, and fellowship events. For the first few months we felt like we were saving lives, and even the next few months as we looked to safe forms of worship, which varied significantly by region of the country, we still felt like we were looking out for each other. But as the months passed one after another, and wave after wave of infection hit, it seemed never ending. We were doing the difficult things, but life just didn't get much better. And like the Psalmist, we may have felt like the Lord was absent, not seeing our sufferings as individuals or community, or humanity as a whole.

But Christ who wept at the tomb of Lazarus; Christ who died and rose again has been walking beside the people of Zoar all along – especially during this difficult time. Jesus promised his disciples at the end of Matthew's Gospel, “I am with you always” (Mt 28:20) That “always” isn't only the easy, familiar, spiritual times but all the times of our lives. Christ has known our difficulties, sufferings, and struggles, and our Lord has been with us reminding us that nothing, not even months and months of pandemic can take us out of his hand. And now, as we begin, finally, to look to a post pandemic or at the very least lessened pandemic life, the Lord is still with us in the joyful and the difficult.

After prayer and discussions with Education and Worship leadership and church council, **we are planning to have Sunday, August 8th be the last of our 9:45am service.** This was not an easy decision because a number of people

have found this service time to fit well in their schedules. But as we look to the fall and the restarting of Sunday School, we wanted to have that education hour apart from worship to facilitate: children in worship, Sunday school teachers worshipping with their families, and adults being able to participate in Christian education. We chose August 8th because that gives people a month to adjust their schedules before Rally Day on September 12th. The 9:45 service was a real gift during the pandemic allowing Zoar to have spread out service times which in turn spread out the number of people in the building at any one time. Now as we begin moving toward a post pandemic schedule, we look forward to the lifting of restrictions on numbers of worshippers and face to face classes. For some of you, this will be a disappointing decision, but please know that we didn't make this decision lightly; rather, we believe this will be best for Zoar as we move forward into the 2021-2022 Program year.

I know that this is not the only change to come in the next several months. And I also am convinced that the Lord who has walked beside us for all these months and with Zoar for the past 171 years will continue to lead us forward. So, when we ask, “Lord, will you forget us forever?” Jesus' answer is, “Nope, I'm right here!”

**Peace, Pastor Paul**

# Our Story



My wife Jane and I have an interesting story about how we became members of Zoar Lutheran Church. Unfortunately, by telling this story I will be giving hints as to our age. So please refrain from doing the math!

I was born and raised in Cleveland and attended a Missouri Synod church. Jane and I were married at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Maumee in the early '70s. St. Paul's was the church of her youth.

We moved into an apartment in Rossford and started looking for a home church since it looked like we were going to settle down in NW Ohio. We had visited local Lutheran churches, several of which were under serious consideration. One Sunday morning we attended Zoar. At that time Pastor Melchert and Pastor Wolfe were serving as ministers at Zoar. My home church was very old and Zoar reminded me of home so I knew that I could be comfortable here. The following week we received a call from a member of the congregation encouraging us to worship again at Zoar. We were asked if we minded a visit to our apartment to learn more about Zoar. Jane and I were a little hesitant, but we agreed to host their visit.

At this time both Jane and I were still students. I was finishing an internship in laboratory medicine at St. Charles Hospital. Our Rossford apartment was furnished with webbed folding chairs, one rocking chair and not much else on very popular, luxurious green shag carpeting. Over the next several weeks we received several additional visits.

If you have been a member at Zoar for any length of time, you might know the names of our Zoar visitors. They were, Russ Heckman, Bill Brooks, Lloyd Hill, and Paul Smithers. To this day I remember their visits and the impact they had on our decision to join Zoar. These gentlemen did an incredible job representing Zoar Lutheran Church, its members and its mission.

Prior to writing this story, I spoke to Paul Smithers. He recalls making these visits and stated that there were other Zoar members doing similar visits.

To this day Jane and I thank God for their witness and the greater Zoar community which has enriched our four children, Jane and I over these many years. Our heartfelt thanks to Russ, Bill, Lloyd and Paul and the other men and women who were involved in this ministry.

Zoar Gathers, Grows and Gives, then and now,

Respectfully,

**Brian and Jane Tomko**





# WORSHIP IN JULY

This month's lectionary readings seem to offer us specific glimpses into what Dietrich Bonhoeffer called costly discipleship. In July, ponder different aspects of Christian living: bearing witness, speaking truth to power, caring for the sick, and feeding the hungry. Lutheran biblical scholar Gail Ramshaw notes, supplemented with local worship information follow.

## JULY 3/4 - Jesus sends the twelve to preach and heal

The willingness to bear witness is a theme that unites all this day's readings. For example, Psalm 123 invites us to let go of results in favor of relationship while Paul's sometimes confusing logic becomes clear as he sums up God's word to him: "My grace is sufficient for you . . ." That is a powerful word, which can make almost any experience an opportunity to witness to Christ's power. Our hymn of the day will be God's Work, Our Hands (ACS 1000). Sunday's worship will be held in the open at Lutheran Church of the Master.

## JULY 10/11 - The Death of John the Baptist

Few of us want to hear a hard truth, and perhaps fewer of us want to be the ones called to deliver one. Today's texts remind us that bearing God's word is risky business. Yet this is precisely what God calls us to do: we are sent from worship each week to proclaim God's in-breaking reign to all the powers that profess to rule this world. Through us, God speaks words of peace, love, and faithfulness that challenge the world's violence, hatred, and treachery. ELW 812, Faith of Our Fathers will be our hymn of the day.

## JULY 17/18 - Christ heals the multitude

The letter to the Ephesians suggests that lasting safety comes through the healing and reconciling work of Christ, which allows us to share a meal with those we are inclined to regard as enemies because Christ has "broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us." So, in Christ, aliens become citizens, and strangers become members of the household of God because in Christ, God's future reign of peace has already broken into our present. Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life (ELW 719) will be our communal response to the gospel.

## JULY 24/25 - The Feeding of the 5000

A sentence written by the late United Nations Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld comes to mind: "Each morning we must hold out the chalice of our being to receive, to carry, and give back." Today's Scriptures open a door for us to think about how individuals and communities are nourished and sustained by God and imagine how we become vessels of the holy who are now opened to the call of service. Our hymn of the day is Loaves Were Broken, Words Were Spoken (ACS 966).



from  
**Omaldo**  
Cantor

[operez@zoarlutheran.com](mailto:operez@zoarlutheran.com)

*Come seek the ways of Wisdom, she who  
danced when Earth was new. Follow closely  
what she teaches, for her words are right  
and true. Wisdom clears the path to justice,  
showing us what love must do.  
Come Seek the Ways of Wisdom  
(All Creation Sings 971 St. 1)*

If you have been to church in the last few weeks, you may have noticed how the gospel readings have taken a sharp didactic turn to focus on the teachings of Jesus. While we see this pattern repeated every year, some of the lectionary's "green" offerings this Summer may not be heard from our pulpit again until 2024.

Such is the case with Mark 6:1-13, which falls on the commemoration of our national independence this year. This alignment is a serendipitous reminder of our true vocation: Jesus sends his disciples to share the good news, but the text adds, "they cast out many demons and anointed with oil many who were sick and healed them."

This narrative tacitly articulates the type of discipleship we are to emulate. From the beginning of our tradition, there has been a pressing concern for the ill and marginalized. Mark reminds us that blessing others by alleviating their pain and suffering has always been part of God's plan. Let us pray:

*All our meals and all our living make as  
sacraments of you, That by caring, helping,  
giving, we may be disciples true. Alleluia!  
Alleluia! We will serve with faith anew.  
Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether  
(ELW 470 St. 3)*

Omaldo Perez

# JULY YOUTH EVENTS

**July 4th** – HAPPY FOURTH OF JULY! No Youth Group!

**July 11th** – 2022 ELCA Youth Gathering Interest Meeting 12PM  
Waterpalooza 4PM!

**July 18th** – No Youth Group!

**July 25th** – Start of Zoar 2021 Service Week! 6PM Daily

## Zoar Summer Service Week 2021

Mark your calendars for this year's Zoar Summer Service Week! During the week of July 25th-July 29th Zoar youth, families and the WHOLE CONGREGATION will be invited to join in one service project per day. Stay tuned for specifics and how you can help!

## ELCA Youth Gathering 2022

The 2022 ELCA Youth Gathering is scheduled for **Sunday, July 24 – Thursday, July 28, 2022**. It will be held in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

All youth who begin **8th – 12th grade this fall** are eligible. Early bird registration begins mid-September and saves us money. We ask families to contribute the \$150 non-refundable registration to reserve their young person's spot!

For more information mark your calendars for July 11th at 12PM and join us for our hybrid 2022 ELCA Youth Gathering Interest Meeting (in person OR on Zoom).

## Safari Animal Word Search!

Find the words in the grid below! Words can go horizontally, vertically, and diagonally in all eight directions.

### Safari Animals



KUDU  
LEOPARD  
SPRINGBOK  
ELAND  
CROCODILE  
BABOON  
GIRAFFE  
ELEPHANT  
BUFFALO  
HIPPO  
RHINO  
WARTHOG  
GAZELLE  
ZEBRA  
CHEETAH  
CIVET  
HYENA  
LION

Play this puzzle online at : <https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/11/>



from

**Amanda**

**Director of Youth Ministries**

[arich@zoarlutheran.com](mailto:arich@zoarlutheran.com)

Happy July Everyone!

It has been such a blessed summer being able to slowly reopen and be together. I am so grateful for the help I have received throughout this season of youth and children's ministry. Our 2021 Vacation Bible School helped us to see and remember the light of God which is so appropriate for this age in which we live.

As we journey forward together I remind each of you to find the light of God within you and shine it bright in all you do! Help those whose light may seem dim to find their way and lend an encouraging ear or hand to those who need it.

Your work will not go unnoticed, you are appreciated and loved. When we share the light we hold within us, the world becomes a better and brighter place.

With Gratitude,

**Amanda Rich**

# 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

## JULY // 2021

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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for a complete list of events, please check  
the Z-Blast for weekly announcements

				1 9AM Men's Golf	2 1PM Zoar Book Club	3 6PM Worship
4 8AM Virtual Worship 10AM Outdoor Worship	5 CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED	6 9AM Quilters 3:14PM Prayer w/ Staff 1PM & 6PM Pickleball 7PM LLL	7 8AM Bible Study 11AM Staff 1PM Men's Cards 3:30 AL II 8PM Uncorked Faith	8 9AM Men's Golf	9 11AM Solo Again	10 6PM Worship
11 8AM Virtual Worship 8:30, 9:45, 11AM Worship 12PM ELCA Youth Gathering Meeting 4PM Youth Group	12 7:30PM Men's Bball	13 9AM Quilters 3:14PM Prayer w/ Staff 5:30PM Comm 6PM Budget Finance 7PM Stewardship	14 8AM Bible Study 9:30AM MEBS 11AM Staff 1PM Men's Cards 7PM YAYA	15 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 9AM Men's Golf 10AM FOF	16	17 10AM Prayer Partners 6PM Worship
18 8AM Virtual Worship 8:30, 9:45, 11AM Worship	19 7PM Worship & Music Committee 7:30PM Men's Bball	20 9AM Quilters 3:14PM Prayer w/ Staff 1PM & 6PM Pickleball 7PM Council	21 8AM Bible Study 11AM Staff 1PM Men's Cards	22 9AM Men's Golf	23	24 6PM Worship
25 ZOAR SERVICE WEEK 8AM Virtual Worship 8:30, 9:45, 11AM Worship	26 6PM Service Week 7PM Personnel 7:30PM Men's Bball	27 9AM Quilters 3:14PM Prayer w/ Staff 1PM & 6PM Pickleball 6PM Service Week	28 8AM Bible Study 9:30AM MEBS 11AM Staff 1PM Men's Cards 1:30 AL I 6PM Service Week	29 9AM Quilters 10AM FOF 3:14PM Prayer w/ Staff 6PM Service Week	30	31 6PM Worship

### OUR 85+ MEMBER JULY BIRTHDAYS:

July 1	Marilyn Brossia	July 29	Marian Meyerholtz
July 11	Charles Rinker	July 29	Betty Henry
July 22	Neil Thomford		

### ZOAR STAFF

Senior Pastor: Rev. Dr. Tim Philabaum  
Pastor: Paul Reichert  
Cantor: Omaldo Perez

Director of Youth Ministry: Amanda Rich  
Administrative Manager: Jen Milligan  
Secretary: Suzanne Delaney

Communications Director: Sonia Krolak  
Custodian: Paul Cannon

# WE WISH TO THANK OUR SPONSORS

Would you like to place a birthday announcement or congratulatory message in the Zoar monthly newsletter? Send an email to [communications@zoarlutheran.com](mailto:communications@zoarlutheran.com) for pricing and availability.

Deadline is the 5th of the preceding month!



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"To you I lift up my eyes,  
to you enthroned in the  
heavens."

Psalm 123

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Rev. Dr. Tim Philabaum  
Senior Pastor

Pastor Paul Reichert

**Worship Times:**

Saturday: 6 PM

Sunday: 8 AM Virtual Worship,  
8:30, 9:45 & 11 AM

*Be*  
**AmaZed!**

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