

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

NOVEMBER // 2021



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## Harvest ground

BY ANGELA T. IKHABEB

It's harvest season in various parts of the United States. I'm mindful of a parable Jesus shares about a harvest where the crops were infiltrated by weeds. Jesus compares the kingdom of God to a farmer who sows good seed in his field. While everyone is sleeping, the enemy creeps in and sows weeds in this farmer's field.

At first this dastardly deed goes unnoticed. But soon the field is one hot mess. When the workers ask if they should pull the weeds, the farmer tells them not to because they will risk uprooting the wheat as well. Instead, they let the weeds and the wheat grow together.

The point of this parable isn't for us to remain silent when evil is present, but rather to reflect God's goodness by continuing to grow even when evil is all around us and, yes, at times within us. Perhaps the weeds aren't the problem, and the issue is that our perspectives can be blurred by our preconceptions and egos. We look at a situation and focus on what we think is right without regard for the least among us.

Self-proclaimed "good people" get it wrong all the time. Good people, who certainly consider themselves to be the wheat of the world, can make terrible mistakes in the name of God.

God's call on our lives is real, and Jesus chooses to have us grow in and among the weeds—so much so that we can't tell where the weeds end and the wheat begins. Jesus expects us to live in and among those whom our society would rather ignore, forget or condemn.

Nothing can stop our God—not the evil outside and not the evil within. Jesus calls and invites all of us to live as wheat and to allow God to refine our lives so that the weedy things about us may be transformed.

Beloveds, our God is indeed in the transformation business, and I'm here to tell ya, business is good!

*This article first appeared at [livinglutheran.org](http://livinglutheran.org) on October 8, 2021. Length modified to fit page. Reprinted with permission. © ELCA.*



# All Saints Day

Once again we come to the beginning of November, when we give thanks for those who have died in the Lord. These "saints" have been claimed and named by Jesus as one of His own, and now rest in his grace. We will give thanks for these saints during the weekend of November 6 and 7. *"For all the saints, who from their labors rest, to thee, O Jesus, be forever blessed!"*

Those who have died since last All Saints Sunday\* include:

**Marjorie Celia Mangus  
Betty Jane Creps  
Serena Barnard  
Randi McNamee  
Eric Frey  
Marcelle Hahn  
Betty Coger  
Daniel Craig Bell  
Richard Dauer**

**Nadine Hartzog  
Nancy Heckman  
Gary Karnes  
Norman Nitschke  
Gerald Johnson  
Patricia Sue Penny  
Earl Habel  
Judy Gottschling  
Michelle Beck**

**Dennis Emch  
Deborah Reiner  
Gloria Weidner  
Ramona Abke  
Lois Ann Hill  
Russell Heckman  
Linda Jean Wagner  
Kathi Jo Saleh**

In addition to those who have died this past year, we give thanks for those who have become saints through their baptism. In this sacred washing, Jesus claims us as His own, part of God's family. As we give thanks for them also at our All Saints weekend, we ask that you keep them in prayer, that they may grow strong in the love and grace of our Lord!

Those baptized since last All Saints Sunday\* include:

**Evelyn Maxine Bucher  
Finn Robert Seambs  
Evelyn Lambrix  
Lillian Grovie Jones  
Brooklyn Grayce Thornton  
Lily Anne Haas  
Olivia Jean Kohv  
Michael Sternberg  
Xari West Searle  
Grace Lee Munson**

**Madden Kole Wood  
Harper Grace Lenin  
Elliot David Hieber  
Jackson Mason Jones  
Taylor Dream Hodulik  
Everly Gray Tucker  
Cole Joseph Tazzi  
Baker Roger Peinert  
Parker Grayson Searle  
Elaine Cherie Brown**

**Alden Robert Szozda  
Charlie Nester Williams  
Ian John Martin  
Vivienne Claire Hentges  
Sawyer John Speck  
Levi Alexander Tucker  
Nathaniel Sean McNulty  
Kaia Mae Searle  
Wesley Allen Rowe  
Benjamin Michael Hahn**

\*The names on these lists are updated as of October 15, 2021.



from  
**Pastor Paul**  
Senior Pastor  
[pastorpaul@zoarlutheran.com](mailto:pastorpaul@zoarlutheran.com)

When I say we are going to be celebrating Thanksgiving this month, I don't imagine you immediately jumped to the dedication of the foundation of the Second Temple in Jerusalem. Because, of course, in America, we connect the holiday of Thanksgiving with the celebration of the second autumn of the pilgrim immigrants at Plymouth. But these two events and this Thanksgiving have more in common than you think.

We think about Thanksgiving as a joyful celebration of the harvest. Giving thanks to God for providing so abundantly. And both the beginning of the second Temple and the second autumn harvest were celebrations which were rightly focused on God as the author of the joy and feast of celebration.

Two things for us to notice. **One**, these celebrations of thanksgiving took a massive amount of work to prepare. In the case of Israel, hundreds of miles of walking, organizing skill groups, obtaining permission and materials and the work of setting the stones themselves. With the pilgrims, learning from their Native American friends how to successfully plant and grow crops and then doing the work of farming by hand. And **two**, both celebrations happen in situations of struggle and grief. The Jewish people had been in exile for decades and are rebuilding quite literally on the ruins of Solomon's Temple, an act so full of grief that the next verse talks about some people's weeping. And the pilgrims are gathered around tables that have half of their fellow shipmates absent because they had died over the previous year.

The act of thanksgiving is not the absence of grief. Thanksgiving is recognizing the source of hope and life in the midst of whatever we are going through. For many, 2021 has again been a difficult year with people of Gulf coast and the Western US looking over ruins due to hurricanes and fires. People who are sitting down to Thanksgiving dinner have many empty places around the table due to deaths and travel restrictions. Looking back to last Thanksgiving, we certainly thought we would be past all this by now. Yet in the middle of all this, we still dare to give thanks because in love our Lord Jesus Christ lived, suffered, died, and rose again that we might have the gift of Eternal life – not based on how well our year has gone but rather on the wondrous grace of God.

So, even in 2021 that has given us so many opportunities to look up with disbelief crying, "Really God!!" We are thankful for the one whose love for us changes everything, Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Peace, Pastor Paul**

**"With praise and thanksgiving they sang to the Lord: 'The Lord is Good; God's love toward Israel endures forever.'"**

**Ezra 3:11**



# NOVEMBER YOUTH UPDATE

**November 7** – Youth Group: *Yard Games in the FLC!* (4PM)

**November 14** – Service Sunday: *Thanksgiving Cards for Nursing Homes!* (4PM)

**November 21** – Mandatory ELCA Youth Gathering Participant Meeting *Session #1* (3PM)

**November 21** – Youth Group: *Game Night!* (4PM)

**November 28** – Thanksgiving Weekend: *No Youth Group or Sunday School / Advent Begins!*

## **Yard Game Night**

Join us for an evening of yard game fun (cornhole, life size connect four, yard dice, ladder ball and more!) **Sunday, November 7th from 4-5PM.**

## **Service Sunday - Thanksgiving Cards for Nursing Homes**

Join us for youth group **Sunday, November 14th from 4-5PM** as we write cards for friends in local nursing homes to brighten their holiday season!

## **Board Game Night**

Bring your FAVORITE board game and join us in the FLC for a night of games **Sunday, November 21st** (following the Youth Gathering Participant Meeting) **from 4-5PM.**

## **Advent Workshop**

Sunday School Families are invited to join us **Sunday, December 5th during the Sunday School hour** to create advent wreaths - a fun craft project that will be used for years to come! Sign up is required to attend. Please check your weekly youth and children's ministry update on how to do so!

## **Youth & Family Christmas Program**

**Sunday, December 12th during the 11AM Worship Service** we are planning a Youth and Family Christmas Program. Please keep a close eye on your Z-Blast for information on how to be involved and more!



from  
**Amanda**  
**Director of Youth Ministries**  
[ahoyles@zoarlutheran.com](mailto:ahoyles@zoarlutheran.com)

Greetings Zoar Family and Friends,

Happy November! We have reached the season of gratitude, my favorite time of year. I am BEYOND grateful for all of you whom I get to share in making so many memories with around Zoar and in the community.

As we again approach Thanksgiving, followed by the season of advent, I invite you to take some time and give your thanks to God! Find a moment of peace in your busy schedules and spend time with the one who has given of Himself for us.

Peace,  
**Amanda Hoyles**



# WORSHIP IN NOVEMBER

November 2021 sees both the end and the beginning of the Church's liturgical calendar, a pairing that seems paralleled in the topics explored in the Lectionary. The following are some overviews adapted for our use, gathered from the writings of biblical scholar and Lutheran theologian Gail Ramshaw.

## NOVEMBER 6/7 – All Saints: Unbinding the Living

On All Saints Sunday, we remember loved ones who have been laid in the tomb. We know the acute grief of Mary, Martha, and Jesus. We know that at any moment, the phone call could come with news we dread. We live forever in the shadow of death. Yet Jesus speaks the last word for us: "Unbind him, and let him go" (John 11:44). This promise is bursting with resurrecting life. The final word is not death but life as a beloved child of God.

## NOVEMBER 13/14 – Lectionary 33: Real Strength in Community

In ancient times, the temple in Jerusalem was thought to be stronger and more permanent than anything, yet Jesus says in Mark, "Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down" (Mark 13:2). Jesus shows his listeners true strength is not built upon the oppression of widows (Mark 12:41-44). Real power, these words seem to suggest, is not shown in things built by human hands, but in the hands themselves. The new, true temple, Jesus' faithful strength, succumbs in weakness to human-made nails. Yet, while the nails lie rusting away, the wounded hands rise again to break bread with all on the journey down the path of life.

## NOVEMBER 20/21 – Christ the King: Love Redefines Power

In John's gospel for today, Jesus says, "For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth" (John 18:37). Perhaps the 'this' Jesus is referring to is a motioning with his hands to the cross, the most explicit demonstration of God's love for humanity and the truest definition of kingship. Jesus redefines what power is and what people think God's power looks like. Jesus does not resist the way of the cross with force. Instead, the vulnerable King Jesus dares to demonstrate God's love for all people. The risen Jesus, "the ruler of the kings of the earth" (Rev. 1:5), rushes to the places of disaster and suffering in the world.

## NOVEMBER 27/28 – Advent I: Don't Wait for the Kingdom

As Advent begins, we look forward to the celebration of Jesus' first coming to the world in the light of a text that promises his final coming. We, like Luke, live in the time between these two "advents" of Jesus. This Sunday's gospel gives us guidance on living faithfully as we wait for Jesus to return. Jesus tells us we should not feel beaten down or defeated by the struggles of this world, but instead, "stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near" (Luke 21:28). We should live with our eyes focused on today's signs that demonstrate God's reign and trust that Jesus' redemption of the world will one day be complete.



from  
**Omaldo**

**Cantor**

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

Today I want to invite us to think of memory as a form of resistance. It is the experiences that form us that, eventually, become the stories that later define us. These stories gift us ourselves to ourselves and others. Viewed from this angle, memory anchors and guards our sense of being against dissolution, be it physical or mental. It also buttresses our integrity—not in the common understanding of the word, as in "honest," but in the original meaning, as wholesome individuality (this etymology, used in this last sense, becomes evident when we remember integrity comes from the word "integer," "one"). Finally, memory provides us with an understanding of a continuous self through time, one which flows from the past to inform our present.

This idea gives us one model. Another model for our identity has a sci-fi feel, but it is fundamental in our lives as baptized children of God. We have given voice to it many times at Zoar when we sing the Susan Palo Cherwien hymn, "Rise, O Church, Like Christ Arisen," ELW 548. In it, we can read in the third stanza the fantastic line: "Rise, remember well the future God has called us to receive." In short, we are admonished to mind our identity in terms of God's future for the whole creation.

So, in the context of our November readings, I invite us to resist and persist in the face of all the forces that threaten to distort that marvelous identity and that wondrous future God has in store for us.

Peace,  
**Omaldo**



# ZOAR CALENDAR OF EVENTS HIGHLIGHTS

## NOVEMBER // 2021

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	<b>1</b> 5:30PM Yoga 6PM Property 7PM Social Ministry 7:30PM Men's Bball	<b>2</b> NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 9AM Quilters 1PM & 6PM Pickleball 3:14PM Prayer w/ Staff 7PM LLL	<b>3</b> 8AM Bible Study 11AM Staff 1PM Men's Cards 3:30PM AL 2 6:30PM Confirmation 8PM Uncorked Faith	<b>4</b> 7PM W Chancel Choir	<b>5</b> 1PM Zoar Book Club	<b>6</b> 6PM Worship
<b>7</b> 8AM Virtual Worship 8:30, 11AM Worship 9:45AM Sunday School 12:15PM Cantorei Jr. 4PM Youth Group	<b>8</b> 5:30PM Yoga 7:30PM Men's Bball	<b>9</b> 9AM Quilters 1PM & 6PM Pickleball 3:14PM Prayer w/ Staff 6PM Comm 7PM Stewardship	<b>10</b> 8AM Bible Study 11AM Staff 1PM Men's Cards 1PM Rachel Circle 6:30PM Confirmation 7:30PM YAYA	<b>11</b> 7PM W Chancel Choir	<b>12</b> 8AM Men's Breakfast 10:30AM Mom's Club 1PM Solo Again	<b>13</b> 10AM Yarns of Love 6PM Worship
<b>14</b> 8AM Virtual Worship 8:30, 11AM Worship 9:45AM Sunday School 12:15PM Cantorei Jr. 1PM Youth Group	<b>15</b> 7PM Worship & Music 7:30PM Men's Bball	<b>16</b> 9AM Quilters 1PM & 6PM Pickleball 3:14PM Prayer w/ Staff 6PM Altar Guild 7PM Council	<b>17</b> 8AM Bible Study 11AM Staff 1PM Men's Cards 5PM Cantorei Jr. 6:30PM Confirmation 7PM M Chancel Choir	<b>18</b> 9:15AM Naomi Circle 7PM W Chancel Choir	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> 10AM Prayer Partners 6PM Worship
<b>21</b> 8AM Virtual Worship 8:30, 11AM Worship 9:45AM Sunday School 12:15PM Cantorei Jr.	<b>22</b> 6:30PM Personnel 7:30PM Men's Bball	<b>23</b> 9AM Quilters 1PM & 6PM Pickleball 3:14PM Prayer w/ Staff	<b>24</b> 8AM Bible Study 11AM Staff 1:30PM AL 1 5PM Cantorei Jr. 7PM Thanksgiving Worship	<b>25</b> THANKSGIVING DAY	<b>26</b> CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED	<b>27</b> 6PM Worship
<b>28</b> 8:30, 11AM Worship 9:45AM Sunday School 11AM Live Worship 12:15PM Cantorei Jr.	<b>29</b> 7:30PM Men's Bball	<b>30</b> 1PM & 6PM Pickleball 3:14PM Prayer w/ Staff	for a complete list of events, please check the Z-Blast for weekly announcements			

### OUR 85+ MEMBER NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS:

**November 15** Dorothy Beyer  
**November 27** Rosalie Moser  
**November 30** Joyce Grimshaw

### ZOAR STAFF

Senior Pastor: Paul Reichert  
 Cantor: Omaldo Perez  
 Director of Youth Ministry: Amanda Hoyles

Administrative Manager: Jen Milligan  
 Secretary: Suzanne Delaney  
 Custodian: Paul Cannon

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Deadline is the 2nd of the preceding month!



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**CURRENT RESIDENT OR:**

Pr. Paul Reichert  
Senior Pastor

Worship Times:  
Saturday: 6 PM  
Sunday: 8 AM Virtual Worship,  
8:30 & 11 AM

Sunday School: 9:45 AM

*Be*  
**AmaZed!**



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"Then he said to me, 'It is done!  
I am the Alpha and the Omega,  
the beginning and the end.'"

—Revelations 21:6a

