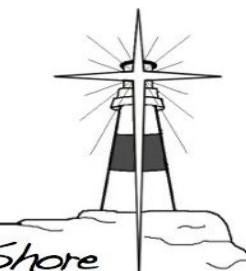


# The Beacon

## ZOAR CHURCH PARISH NEWS

*A Beacon of Hope on the North Shore*



### Christmas Poinsettias

Christmas poinsettias are now available for purchase. Each poinsettia plant is \$10. A message of your choosing will be printed in the Christmas bulletin. You can have the plant be in memory, honor, or in celebration of an individual. Checks for the correct amount should be made payable to *Zoar Lutheran Church* and can be turned into the church office. The plants may be taken home after the service on Christmas Eve.



### Christmas Caroling

Zoar Church will be joining with other churches in the county to sing Christmas carols at the Care Center in Grand Marais on **Sunday December 18 at 12:45 PM**. After singing at the Care Center we will disperse into the Grand Marais community to continue caroling. On **Thursday December 22** we will sing in the Tofte area. Meet at the church at **4:30 PM** and head out from there to bring some joy into the community. If you know of someone who might enjoy being caroled to please email the church with their name and phone number so we can be sure to make a visit to their home. Afterwards we will be returning to the church for some hot cocoa and apple cider.



### Upcoming Messages

By Pastor Daren Blanck

#### The Carols of Advent - Through Dec. 24

Advent is a time when we wait in eager anticipation for Christ's coming - for our yearly celebration of his birth at Christmas and his coming again someday. This year we've been listening and singing our way through the season as we discover more deeply the stories and meaning behind some familiar songs. The series culminates on Christmas Eve!



*December 18: Go Tell it on the Mountain!*  
*December 24: (Not So) Silent Night*

#### The Power of Words - January 2017

It's been said "sticks and stones will break my bones, but words will never hurt me," yet we all know that it's not true. The Bible says "Death and life are in the power of the tongue..." (*Psalm 18:21*). Like a force of nature, the tongue has the power to destroy or build up, to polarize or unite. How do we reign in hurtful words and instead, use our tongues to bless others? Join us for a practical, relevant and inspirational series of messages as we explore the power of our words in our families, at work, in the digital age and in the political arena.



*January 1: Tearing Down or Building Up?*  
*January 8: In the Beginning Was the Word*  
*January 15: E Pluribus Unum*  
*January 22: Family Words: Hurtful or Life Giving?*

We welcome you to worship with us regardless of your background or heritage. We are committed to being the church of your community!

## Haiti Hurricane Matthew Relief ~ December Mission Project ~



In October Haiti was hit hard by Hurricane Matthew, the fiercest Caribbean storm in nearly a decade. Homes, Schools, Hospitals, and whole villages were washed away or flattened by flooding and the 200+ mph winds.

In December, Zoar Church looks to work with these churches in getting help to some of the worst affected by Hurricane Matthew. We will be partnering in this effort with Waterside Church, a Lutheran Congregation in Mission for Christ in Punta Gorda, Florida. Waterside's pastor, Jonathon Kosec has been working directly with churches in Haiti and mission projects in the Dominican Republic for several years.

One of Waterside's projects, for example, has been Little Sowers School in the Truitier community of Port Au Prince. The school teaches 40-50 students traditional subjects including English and also songs about Jesus. Waterside works with Little Sowers to provide meals to the children once a day - perhaps the only good meal that a child will have in a day. Pastor Jonathan said Waterside seeks to use local labor and skilled workers in all of its community based projects.

Please consider supporting December's mission project.

## Another Baptism at Zoar!



On Sunday December 11 we welcomed **Nora Alexandria Grace** into Christian fellowship through the sacrament of Holy Baptism. We pray that the Holy Spirit will work in Nora's life to bring her to a heartfelt faith in Jesus her savior.

## Lutheran Indian Ministries ~ January Mission Project ~

Less than 5 percent of the more than 5 million Native American people in North America know that they are accepted by God and forgiven in Christ.

Lutheran Indian Ministries proclaims the Gospel of Jesus Christ with Native American peoples, disciples Native leaders to share the Gospel with their brothers and sisters, addresses social sufferings in a way that values Native cultures, and envisions a day when all nations walk together in Christian fellowship. Lutheran Indian Ministries serves Native American communities in the Alaskan interior, Hawaii, the Pacific northwest, and the southwestern US. The Zoar leadership team has chosen Lutheran Indian Ministries for its January mission project. We hope you will be moved by the Holy Spirit to support the ministry of this organization.



**Annual Meeting:** The 2017 annual business meeting of the members and friends of Zoar church will be held on Sunday January 15 immediately following the worship service. Business will include approving the 2017 budget, electing officers, and reviewing the status of various special projects and ministries. More information is available by contacting the church office.

**Benefit for Angela:** Zoar church member Angela Cook has struggled with cancer for more than a year - first with chemo, then experimental drugs, and now with a new round of chemotherapy. Along with her colleagues at the Cook County offices, we are planning a benefit dinner for Angela and her family as they work through this difficult time. Please save February 11 for this event and look for more information to come in the February Newsletter. We hope you can come.

**Water Testing:** The leadership team is looking for your help: someone (male or female) to check our water system weekly - will train.

**Office Project:** Thanks to a recent donation we will have a new desk, and thanks to a Thrivent grant - new carpet. Now we just need some help sprucing up the walls. Call Michelle for more details - 387-5171.



## Blessed to Be a Blessing

In Genesis 12 Abraham is said to be blessed to be a blessing to others. Jesus calls his followers to a life of giving. *Blessed to be a Blessing* is Zoar's program to encourage members to examine their mission, ministry and local congregational giving - financially and in time and talents. It also provides the congregational leadership insight in budget priorities, how members would like to serve their church, what programs or services they would like the church to provide, and provide feedback to the pastor. Pastor Daren is open to any and all input regarding possible message topics and ministry needs in our community. Members and associate members will be receiving a more detailed letter during the month of January. At the same time we welcome input from our friends and community. If you'd like to see the church engaged in a specific program, or you'd like to hear a series of messages on a specific topic, or you'd like to be involved in our ministries in any way, please give us a call or send an email to the church office!



## LCMC Regional Youth Event

Youth from across the midwest will be gathering **March 3-5, 2017** at Three Bears Resort in Warrens, WI for the 6th Annual Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ Regional Youth Event. The theme this year is *Be Strong: Not All Heroes Wear Capes*. Featuring speaker Eric Timm and the music of Peder Eide, this event is open to youth in grades 6-12. Due to a generous donation from a member and friend of Zoar, we are able to sponsor several youth from the area to register for **free**. Check out more details on the event at [facebook.com/catch the wave LCMC regional youth event](https://www.facebook.com/catchthewave) or email Zoar Church. The **registration deadline is January 10, 2017**.

*Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power -*  
Ephesians 6:10

## Night of All Nights!

By Marsha Hansen

Night of all nights! Focus of Time!  
Birth of a Kingman, yet divine!  
Brightest of lights-how He would shine!  
Conquering sin, this Savior of all mankind!

Night of all nights! Ev'ning sublime!  
Heaven would ring; star gave a sign.  
Author of Life, from Jesse's line.  
Angels would sing, and dance Him a lullaby.

In light of blazing glory and splendor from above,  
the shepherds heard the story of God's redeeming love.

Night of all nights! Fragrance of hay.  
God's Spotless Lamb! In manger He lay.  
Night of all nights! This was the Way  
God's loving plan would bring everlasting Day!

## Good News Club

~ The Life of Joseph ~

From favored son, to slave, to prisoner, to a ruler of Egypt, beginning in **January**, Good News Club kids will be learning the story of Joseph and God's promise to send a Savior through his family. Joseph's life was full of hardships and tragedies, as well as great blessings. Perhaps the greatest lesson to be learned from his life is that even if we can't see God working in our lives, He is still there. We can trust Him even in the hard times. What makes the story of Joseph so amazing isn't Joseph, but Joseph's God, who loved him, and loved His people. There's still time to join Good News Club at Birch Grove Community Center. The club meets from 3:15-4:30 every Wednesday. If you know of a 7-11 year old who would like to join, contact Pastor Daren.



**Hooray!** There will be lots of warm heads and hands this winter as so many people donated to the mitten tree. By December 15 you couldn't see the tree for all the beautiful hats, mittens, and scarves! Thanks for your generosity.



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## Community Soup Suppers Wednesdays at 5:30 PM

Come and grab a hot bowl of soup **Wednesday evenings!** The soup supper is a great way to get out of the house during these dark, cold months and join fellow community members for a delicious meal, great conversation and a song or two! Everyone is welcome so please bring your friends and family. The soup is served from 5:30pm until 7pm. The meal is provided at no cost by friends and members of Zoar Church. After a week off for the Birch Grove School program, there **will** be a soup supper on **December 21**. There **will not** be a soup supper on **December 28**. We **will** resume on **January 4**.



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**Sunday Worship at Zoar Church: 9:30 am.**  
**Sola Sunday School for Youth & Adults: 8:00 am.**  
**Bible Study - Thursday: 10:00 am. Open to all.**

## Service of Carols and Lights Christmas Eve at 4:30 PM

Please join us in worship at the annual Christmas Eve Service of Carols and Lights at **4:30 PM** on **December 24**. Enjoy Christmas with the Tofte-Schroeder North Shore community - all are welcome. There will be no worship at Zoar on Christmas day. Sunday worship will resume on New Year's Day, January 1 at 9:30 AM.



Thank you members and friends for donating the tree and wreaths, and for volunteering your time to decorate Zoar's sanctuary for the Christmas season.

