

First Sunday after Christmas, December 28, 2025
Zoar Church, Tofte, MN

Welcome Visitors - Please fill out the Visitor Card and put it in the giving box in the Narthex

Pastor: In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

Congregation: Amen

Pastor: The Lord be with you

Congregation: And also with you

Opening Prayer

Bell

Confession and Forgiveness (From Psalm 51 & Romans 7)

Pastor: Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love;

Congregation: According to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions and my sin is always before me. I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do I keep on doing. (Silence for prayer and reflection)

P: Cleanse me and I will be clean;

C: Wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and uphold me with your free Spirit. Amen

Gathering Hymn "O Come All Ye Faithful"

V1 O come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him
Born the King of Angels:

V2 Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of Heaven above!
Glory to God
In the highest:

V3 Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
Born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be glory given!
Word of the Father,
Now in flesh appearing!

Refrain
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord.

Prayers & The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

Opening Hymn: “Hark the Herald Angels Sing”

<i>Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the new born King, Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!” Joyful, all ye nations rise, Join the triumph of the skies; With the angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!” Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the new born King!”</i>	<i>Christ, by highest heaven adored; Christ, the everlasting Lord; Late in time behold him come, Offspring of a virgin’s womb. Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; Hail th’ incarnate Deity, Pleased as man with man to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel. Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the new born King!”</i>	<i>Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness! Light and life to all he brings, Risen with healing in his wings. Mild he lays he glory by, Born that man no more may die, Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give us second birth. Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the new born King!”</i>
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Old Testament Readings: Psalm 96:8, Proverbs 3:9-10 (NIV)

Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;
bring an offering and come into his courts.

Honor the Lord with your wealth,
with the firstfruits of all your crops;
then your barns will be filled to overflowing,
and your vats will brim over with new wine.

New Testament Reading: Ephesians 1:3-10 (NIV)

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 2:1-15 (NIV)

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. “In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written:

“‘But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for out of you will come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel.’”

Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him."

So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: "Out of Egypt I called my son."

P: The Word of God for the people of God

C: Thanks be to God

Message: "Gifts" - Pastor Al Alexander

Apostle's Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.
On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the
right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the
dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit
the holy Christian church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen

Closing Hymn: "The First Noel"

V1 *The first Noel the angels did say
Was to certain poor shepherds
In fields as they lay,
In fields where they lay
Keeping their sheep
On a cold winter's night
That was so deep.
Noel Noel Noel Noel!
Born is the King of Israel!*

V2 *They looked up and saw a star
Shining in the East beyond them far,
And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued both day and night.
Noel Noel Noel Noel!
Born is the King of Israel!*

V3 *And by the light of that same star
Three wise men came from country far,
To seek for a King was their intent
And to follow the star
Wherever it went.
Noel Noel Noel Noel!
Born is the King of Israel!*

Announcements

- December Mission: CHUM - See poster in Narthex
- Community Bible Study
 - Tuesdays at 3:00 pm at Zoar or Zoom (contact lmsalexand@gmail.com)
 - This week - Peace
- Worship at North Shore Living today at 2:00 pm
- No Bible Club or Soup Supper this week
- Zoar is looking for
 - A piano player to play for one or preferably two services per month.
 - A Sunday School teacher for one or two Sundays a month
 - Contact Linda at 612 817 8045
- Please pray through the Zoar prayer list every day
- Sign up to pray for one of our young people
- Pick up a copy of Our Daily Bread devotional in the Narthex
- To get on the prayer chain - email or call Pastor Al or the church.
- Prayer Requests - Form in seat back; box in Narthex
- Sign up for after church treats
 - Signup Genius on Zoar Facebook page and website
- Puzzle exchange - downstairs in the fellowship hall. Lots of new puzzles!
- Billy Peterson book - See Pastor Al
- Giving: Box in Narthex, online through our webpage or send a check to the church.

Sending Hymn: "Angels We Have Heard on High"

V1 *Angels we have heard on high
Sweetly singing o'er the plains
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains*

V3 *Come to Bethlehem and see
Him Whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee,
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.*

Refrain
*Gloria, in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!*

V2 *Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heavenly
song?*

V4 *See Him in a manger laid
Jesus Lord of heaven and earth;
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid,
With us sing our Savior's birth.*

Benediction Jude 1:24-25 (NIV)

To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy— to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen

Sending

Pastor Al: Go in peace and serve the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God. We Will! Alleluia. Amen

Bell and Dismiss

Website: www.zoarchurch.org • Email: zoarchurchtofte@gmail.com • Church Phone: 218-663-7925
Al Alexander, Pastor • Music provided this morning by Linda Alexander

Offerings can be dropped in the labeled box in the narthex
or by clicking the link “Give” on the zoarchurch.org homepage.