

Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost, August 30, 2026
Zoar Church, Tofte, MN

Call to Worship “Goin’ To Church on Sunday” - Boogie Woogie Gospel

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 reflection and confession)

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 “Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah” - CCLI # 1448

V1 Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but Thou art mighty,
Hold me with Thy pow’rful hand.
Bread of heaven, Bread of heaven,
Feed me till I want no more;
Feed me till I want no more.

V3 When I tread the verge of Jordan,
Bid my anxious fears subside;
Bear me through the swelling current,
Land me safe on Canaan’s side.
Songs of praises, songs of praises,
I will ever give to Thee;
I will ever give to Thee.

V2 Open now the crystal fountain,
Whence the healing stream doth flow;
Let the fire and cloudy pillar
Lead me all my journey through.
Strong Deliv’rer, strong Deliv’rer,
Be Thou still my Strength and Shield;
Be Thou still my Strength and Shield.

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: "Lord of the Dance" - CCLI # 78529

V1 *I danced in the morning
when the world was begun,
And I danced in the moon
and the stars and the sun,
I came down from heaven
and I danced on the earth,
At Bethlehem I had my birth. (Refrain)*

V2 *I danced for the scribe
and the Pharisee,
But they would not dance
and they would not follow me,
I danced for the fishermen,
for James and John,
They came with me
and the dance went on. (Refrain)*

V3 *danced on the Sabbath
and I cured the lame;
The holy people
said it was a shame,
They whipped and they stripped
and they hung me high,
And left me there
on a cross to die. (Refrain)*

V4 *I danced on a Friday
when the world turned black,
It's hard to dance
with the devil on your back.
They buried my body
and they thought I'd gone,
But I am the dance and I still go on. (Refrain)*

V5 *They cut me down
and I leapt up high;
I am the life
that'll never, never die;
I'll live in you
if you'll live in me:
I am the Lord
of the dance, said he. (Refrain)*

Refrain
*Dance, then, wherever you may be,
I am the Lord of the dance, said he,
And I'll lead you all, wherever you may be,
And I'll lead you all in the dance, said he.*

Old Testament Readings: Malachi 3:1; Isaiah 40:3; Malachi 4:5 (NIV)

I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the Lord Almighty.

A voice of one calling: "In the wilderness prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

See, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and dreadful day of the Lord comes.

Epistle Reading: Ephesians 6:11-12 (NIV)

Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 11:7-15 (NIV)

As John's disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swayed by the wind? If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings' palaces. Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written:

"I will send my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.'

Truly I tell you, among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been subjected to violence, and violent people have been raiding it. For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John. And if you are willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who was to come. Whoever has ears, let them hear.

P: The Word of God for the people of God

C: Thanks be to God

Message: ***"Make Straight the Way of the Lord"*** - 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: ***"I Have Decided"*** - CCLI # 24494

V1 *I have decided to follow Jesus;
I have decided to follow Jesus;
I have decided to follow Jesus;
No turning back; no turning back.*

V2 *Though none go with me, I still will follow;
Though none go with me, I still will follow;
Though none go with me, I still will follow;
No turning back; no turning back.*

V3 *The world behind me, the cross before me;
The world behind me, the cross before me;
The world behind me, the cross before me;
No turning back, no turning back.*

Announcements

- August Mission: Birch Grove Kids Meals - See poster in Narthex
- Community Bible Study
 - Monday's 6:00-7:00 pm at Zoar or Zoom (contact lmsalexand@gmail.com)
 - This week: Galatians 5:1-6
- Zoar Church Annual Meeting, Sunday 9/27/26 after church
- Church on the Rocks Sundays at 8:00 am near Fr. Baraga's Cross in Schroeder.
- Please pray through the Zoar prayer list every day
- New Our Daily Bread devotional available in the Narthex
- Prayer Requests - email Pastor Al
- Puzzle exchange - downstairs in the fellowship hall. Lots of puzzles!
- Billy Peterson book - See Pastor Al
- Giving: online through our webpage or send a check to the church.

Sending Hymn: "King of My Heart" - CCLI # 7046145

V1 Let the King of my heart
Be the mountain where I run
The fountain I drink from
Oh, He is my song
Let the King of my heart
Be the shadow where I hide
The ransom for my life
Oh, He is my song (Chorus)

Chorus

('Cause) You are good, good, oh
You are good, good, oh
You are good, good, oh
You are good, good, oh

V2 Let the King of my heart
Be the wind inside my sails
The anchor in the waves
Oh, He is my song
Let the King of my heart
Be the fire inside my veins
The echo of my days
Oh, He is my song (Chorus)

Bridge

You're never gonna let
Never gonna let me down
You're never gonna let
Never gonna let me down (repeat 2X)

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

Bell

Sending

Pastor Al: Go in peace and serve the Lord.

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

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.***