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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Congregational Meeting
- Ongoing Events
- Ash Wednesday and Lenten Services

THINGS TO PONDER

Rev. EvaLyn Carlson

At the beginning of every Lent, I will hear people talk about what they will give up for the season of lent. I had a friend who couldn't figure out what to give up, so she settled on broccoli. Of course, she never did like that green vegetable. But there are others who really worked on the "giving up thing: chocolate, coffee, their favorite TV show, Facebook.....Yet, when I ask if they have given them up for good I get this look like perhaps I am an ant short of a picnic...Seven weeks without chocolate is one thing, but a life time?

Over the years, Lent has become a season in which a lot of us Christians think we're supposed to "suffer." The logic, I guess, is that "since Jesus suffered for us, I will suffer for him (a little). We might just be missing the point here. It seems to me that kind of thinking causes us to once again focus on US (ME) rather than on our Lord.

Surely, Lent is a time when we should be reflecting on our lives in Christ, and we seek to reform our lives with the help of God's grace. The idea is to intentionally look at what we are doing, how we are behaving, how we are living out our lives and then discern how we can better live out our lives in relationship with God. If, for example, coffee is somehow interfering in your relationship with god...then spend that \$20.00 or whatever a week on a food shelf project or some other mission...or how about spending your coffee break in prayer? But then, what I can't quite get my head around is, why then renew the coffee addiction on Easter Sunday morning?

What if we reframe Lent this year...? What if you would consider what you are going to do (or not do) this Lent. Will it be prayer? Fasting? Charitable giving? Something that shifts our eyes from ourselves to others... to Christ, letting a new behavior draw you closer to God...closer to others. What if you'd not just let that discipline lead you through the rest of Lent, but through the rest of your life?

Just pondering.

EvaLyn

GREETINGS FROM MISSIONS WE SUPPORT

We received the following Christmas Greetings from missions we support:

To our friends at Zoar Lutheran
Thanks again for your many prayers and your faithful commitment to Global and Local ministry.

Celebrating the glorious birth of Jesus and wishing you a Christmas filled with His goodness.

Galen and Jill Johnson
The Seed Company

East Europe Missions Network:

The Mighty God has done something great. He has abolished the dividing line between the World and the Heaven His Son Came to live among us and became like us. Let us rejoice and let God in His glory and power be seen among us. Let it be seen by everybody that we have met Jesus Christ.

Let us bless God's Holy name during this Christmas and every day!

Eenok Haamer

On behalf of the Tatu Academy of Theology, Estonia

AND

Greetings to you in Jesus Christ,

To abound is to have a surplus, and abundance, and extravagant portion. Should the fish in the Pacific worry that it will run out of ocean? No. Why? The ocean abounds with water. Need the lark be anxious about finding room in the sky to fly? No. The sky abounds with space.

Should the Christian worry that the cup of mercy will run empty? He may. For he may not be aware that the cup God gives you overflows with mercy. Or, are you afraid your cup will run dry? Your warranty will expire? Are you afraid your mistakes are too great for God's grace?...

God is not a miser with his grace. Our cup may be low on cash or clout, but it is overflowing with mercy.

Remember this, an Have a blessed and peaceful mercy overflowing Christmas

Petrozavodsk Lutheran Church, Russia

LOCAL MISSIONS— THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

From The Cook County Food Shelf:

Dear Members of Zoar Lutheran Church

Thank you for your generous donations of \$150 to the Cook County Food Shelf, in addition to the food that was collected and delivered.

Local support is very important and is well appreciated.

From the Cook County Salvation Army:

Thank you to members of Zoar and Lutsen churches and the community members who

were willing to take the time to ring the bell at the North Shore Market. The generous amount that you were able to collect helped us to help others. We hope you will be available to assist us again next year!

Hat and Mitten Tree:

Thank you to all who knit/crocheted or purchased hats, mittens and scarves that were also donated to the Salvation Army at Christmas time.

OPERATION SHOEBOX 2014

Submitted by Carol Markwell

The Samaritan Purse, Operation Shoe Box, was the outreach mission of the Birthday Club members this past fall. Each month the Birthday Club members choose a mission project. This past summer they elected to fill Christmas shoe boxes for needy children in all parts of the world. Samaritan Purse distributes the boxes to the various countries of need. Before delivery Samaritan Purse inspects each donated box and also places a gospel inside the box for each receiver.

The Birthday Club has supported this mission for several years. By reading about this mission in our newsletter, several of the community members were alerted to this effort, and have involved themselves with their donated gifts. Each participant uses a suggested list given by Samaritan Purse. We find joy in purchasing the small and

inexpensive items to be placed the shoe box. We are happy to report this past year we filled 58 shoe boxes. Not only do the donations of the club members help accomplish this mission, but credit also needs to be given to the participation of the many community members.

I wish to thank each and every Birthday Club member whose donations made it possible this year to fill 58 shoe boxes. I want to thank the community members who also made it their mission to give to Operation Shoe Box. All of us wished we could have been present to watch the children open their Christmas Shoe boxes. Imagine the expressions on their faces. You made it possible. Thank you for making this mission so successful again this year.

MEMORIAL BLOOD DRIVE

Tofte, Lutsen and Schroeder Community Blood Drive

Monday, March 2nd

2:30 TO 6:00 P.M.

Zoar Lutheran Church

Contact Carla at (218) 663-0179

Remember to bring a valid ID.

(If you cannot keep your appointment, please
Call and let us know.)



THE SEASON OF LENT

The 5 Wednesdays of Lent Zoar Lutheran Church will have a soup supper followed by a short service around the theme: Jesus said, “I am the bread of life.”

Each week we will begin with a simple soup supper featuring a different kind of freshly baked bread. Each scent and taste will offer an additional insight into the Lenten worship experience. Whether it is the sweetness of “Welcome Bread”. The bitterness of “Betrayers Bread”, the simplicity of “Daily Bread”, or the exotic “Abundant Bread”, each bread will take us on a journey through the season of Lent, culminating in the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Mid-Week Lenten Fellowship and Worship will meet on Wednesday evenings beginning February 25th at 6 PM.

Join us for this opportunity to be in fellowship and to be fed both physically and spiritually.



HARRY THE MOUSE COLUMN CALLED... “WHAT’S GOING ON AROUND HERE?”

Hi folks, My name is Harry. I have been a church mouse that has traveled with EvaLyn ever since she started Intentional Interim Ministry over 25 years ago. She has aged, but I stay the same young vibrant mouse that she first met. My job is to edit her sermons as well as to keep my ear to the ground for any questions or concerns that may arise in the congregation. I write once a month and can also be found in the Pastor’s office. I particularly like left over crumbs from church fellowship and even have a fondness for Lutefisk. I am looking for a mouse size

Norwegian knit sweater, so you will know me when you see me. Fondly, Harry the Mouse



CALENDAR OF EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

ONGOING EVENTS

Sunday Worship

Church Service—9:30 a.m.

Traditional service: 1st & 4th Sundays
Contemporary service: 2nd & 3rd Sundays
Communion served: 1st & 3rd Sundays
Service w/Rite of Healing: 5th Sunday

Adult Bible Study:
Wednesdays 9:00 AM

Kids" Bible club

At Birch Grove Community Center
Wednesdays
3:15 to 4:00 PM

Confirmation for youth in grades 7 and up
has begun. If interested in more information
please call Tina at 663-0070.

Annual Congregational Meeting

The Leadership Team has scheduled a meeting
of the Congregation on February 22nd, at
10:30AM following the worship service.
We are looking for people willing to serve as a
Council Secretary, Trustee, or Financial Secre-
tary, as well as participants on several short term
committees.

ZOAR Website

While it is still under construction, the Zoar Lu-
theran Church website will be up and running by
the time you get this newsletter. Check us out at
www.zoarchurch.org. We still have information
to add, and links to connect. Please feel free to
share ideas and/or information that is missing.
If anyone is interested in maintaining the site,
keeping it up to date, please let us know. We
thank Tina for taking the initiative to get it
started!

Easter Garden

If you wish to purchase a Lily in honor or in memory of someone special in your
life, fill out the information below, enclose a check and drop it in the offering plate
or mail it to: Zoar Lutheran Church, PO Box 2098, Tofte, MN 55615

Given by: _____ Number of Plants _____

In Memory of: _____

In Honor Of: _____

Orders for Easter Lilies need to be received by March 22. The cost of the Lilies is \$10.00 each.





**ZOAR LUTHERAN CHURCH
(LCMC)**

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TO: BOX HOLDER

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Tofta, MN
Permit No. 1

On December 31, 1905 Zoar Lutheran Church was officially established. Zoar is an uncommon name for a church. It's also an uncommon name in the Bible. In the Hebrew language Zoar means "small." In the days of Abraham, early in the Old Testament, a town just south of the Dead Sea bore that name. It is likely that the founders chose the name Zoar because of what Zoar was for the ancient Hebrews—a place of refuge. It was fitting in 2006, our 100th anniversary, to celebrate under the motto "A Place of Refuge—Past, Present, and Future."



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Zoar Lutheran Church in Tofta, MN

Ash Wednesday Service

7:00 PM

February 18, 2015

Please Join us!

