

Zoar Lutheran Church (LCMC)
P.O. Box 2098
7239 W. Highway 61
Tofte, MN 55616

June-July 2015

ZOAR CHURCH PARISH NEWS

A BEACON OF HOPE ON THE NORTH SHORE

To: Box Holder

Join us at Zoar Church
on Father's Day, Sunday, June 21

**Rod Docken and Carah Thomas
and
Joyce Krueger and the Markwells**

Will perform an afternoon of
Inspirational, Reflective and Gospel Music

Everyone is Welcome!

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Harry Mouse

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told to Marsha Hanson

Galen's Up-date

Pastor Ponderings

I love adventures! Especially each time I would be in a new interim, in a place I didn't know. Now when I was with friends...they would take out a map and chart a course for us to follow and away we would go!

My real preference is different. I thought that having a map was kind of a sissy way to adventure...so one day in September in Martin County, Minnesota I chose to test out my sort of adventure. I went into Fairmont, filled up with gas and headed out. I opened my truck windows and the wind, which was "way windy", blew through the cab. It was like being on a motorcycle, only in the safety of a roof and doors... okay...so it wasn't like being on a motorcycle, it was like being in a pickup with the windows open. But I was on my adventure!

I headed out of town past Larry Vogel's bike shop, and several hours later I ended up.....in.....Mountain Lake (a mere 10 miles away). How could I do that you say? Well, it was really quite easy: you start by taking a right, then a left, then another right. When you come to a washboard gravel road, you drive on that until your fillings are loose then you look for the next paved road to turn either right or left. There was a time or two when I thought I should call a friend and ask how to get back to Fairmont, but then I would have to 'fess up' that I didn't know where I was and I would be questioned as to whether or not I knew who I was....so I put that idea out of my mind.

Oh, but the many things I experienced. I saw windmills and those new fangled wind generator things, I went around, or at least past Budd Lake (what a catchy name). I toured Trimont,(where there were NO mountains) and Alpha, (which was the beginning of I don't know what!) Sherburn, Lewisville... I saw farmers harvesting, ducks flying...and the cutest little community hall not much bigger than my office to be sure. At one intersection in the middle of corn and beans, and beans and corn there was a little bar and grill! Of course, I didn't stop; I wasn't going to ask for directions.... then it wouldn't be an adventure!! I got back into Fairmont in enough light to sweep the cornhusks out of the cab and reflect on a very adventurous day indeed. I experienced so much more than if I had stuck to a map!

I got to pondering about how my adventure was a lot like the interim time that we are

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Rev. EvaLyn Carlson

Submissions to the Parish News are encouraged. We reserve the right to edit essays for content or clarity, but every effort is made to honor the perspectives of the authors. All material in the Parish News reflects the views of the authors and does not necessarily represent the total membership of Zoar Lutheran Church (LCMC).

experiencing together here in Tofte. There is a map of sorts, a rough draft, anyway, of a profile on which the search/council committee worked to choose your new pastor. And they did a good job in finding Darin. Maybe having a map is okay sometimes! I have been thinking, though, about the time we have left to spend together in this interim. We have a couple of choices: we could just adopt that map as is, or we could maybe take a little time and try a few other routes, experience a few different things that maybe we would like to follow. We might find that some of the roads on the map are dead end roads and we don't want to go there. Or they are ways we have gone that we just don't want to go again. There are routes that we love and want to continue to use in our ministry journey.

You can just settle back into a routine and have the safety of a pastor to care for your spiritual needs, or you can open up the windows of opportunities to feel the excitement of finding your own way into ministry; a way that will guide you to eventually develop a map that a new leader can follow in order to minister with you. Hmmmmmmm.....
Just pondering the possibilities,

EvaLyn

What's going on around here?

by Harry the Mouse

Oh my! It does get warm along the shore. Time to shed my Norwegian knit and get a bathing suit? I best not advertise that need! You never can tell what the "Nimble Needles" will come up with! Although the sweater has certainly been a wonderful addition to my wardrobe.

This looks like it will be my last correspondence with you. When your new pastor arrives he probably has his own writer-helper. Maybe a Marmot or a Common Vole, a Shrew or a Stoat? I don't know if any of them are endangered species, but I know that I would be an in-dangered specie if I stick around.

No matter, I just hope, that Darin's writer will enjoy him/herself here as much as I have.

I have learned so much. Norwegian Lutherans at Zoar have a strong sense of community and are very caring for each other. But they also care for the wider community and participate in the way of Jesus to go outside of the the sanctuary doors and BE the church in the world around them. I have noticed that this is a very welcoming church. No one is turned away....not even the four-leggeds that sometimes come with their people pets. Then, of course there are those winged members... snow birds? I wish I had been able to get to know them better because I know that they are a vital part of the ministry of Zoar. They come back in the spring filled with energy, new ideas and step right up to partner in the church's mission.

You would think that the weather would take its toll on the members and friends who

Matters of Interest

Dear Partners in Ministry,

Monday noon: I am sitting in the airport waiting for a plane to Toronto, then to Paris, and then to Bangui. About twenty-four hours straight in a plane, or waiting for one. Friday, I caught a late plane from Dallas to Minneapolis arriving home around midnight.

Why all this flying? Well, it is the nature of "connecting with national partners". Some of my colleagues can successfully accomplish this via email and skype. But my partners are in need of regular encouragement and insights to keep their translation projects moving forward and looking to start some of the remaining language translation needs.

I am also carrying four computers for the projects in the Central African Republic. Getting computers and equipment there is a real trick, especially if it is specialized with Bible translation programs.

This trip is special in that I will be a trainer for the Story-Based Trauma Healing workshop with six national languages. The trauma continues in CAR but there is some light "on the Horizon". Recently there was a forum on restoring peace in the land. A news article reported, "France commends the success of the National Gangui Forum, which took place from May 4 to May 11, and allowed the people of the Central African Republic, in all their diversity, to voice their expectations and to lay the groundwork for national reconciliation."

Please pray for me as I will be away for three and one-half weeks. I will be focused on events and meetings there, but as usual, there is plenty of action back home, too. Elli, who just completed a semester at Normandale Community College, has moved into an apartment downtown and is starting a new job this week. We also focus on our parents: Corrine just celebrated the big "90" and has given up driving; and Paul and Helen are still in their home, and adjusting to life's challenges everyday. So, pray for Jill as she balances work--leading a team of six school nurse consultants--and family.

Every day is a blessing, so "lean into" what God has in store.

Blessings, everyone
Galen Johnson

The Bloodmobile will be in Tofte on July 21, 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

From Pastor Darin

Dear Members of Zoar Lutheran Church and friends of the Tofte and Schroeder Community:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Beginning in July, I will be serving Zoar as the new Pastor: so, a little about me! I grew up in central Minnesota on a little hobby farm with sheep, chickens, and an occasional duck. My father was the county highway engineer, and my mother worked for one of the local banks. I was baptized and confirmed in a Lutheran church where I gained a solid grounding in my faith, but I was also led to make Jesus the Lord of my life during release time in the little community church.

I went to Brainerd High School where I sang in the choir, raced on the cross country ski team and played football. In the summers I loved camping and canoeing. After a summer as a counselor at a Lutheran camp in upstate New York, I spent five more at Wilderness Canoe Base (PCYC) at the end of the Gunflint. I graduated from Bemidji State University with a BA in Social Studies and a BS in Environmental Science in 1992 and spent the next 17 years teaching middle school and high school science and social studies. My first teaching assignment was in Albert Lea followed by Pequot Lakes. In Pequot Lakes, I became active in the community theatre and eventually I found myself directing the student theatre program as well. I also met my wife, Michelle, while I was a teacher in Pequot Lakes and she was teaching in Brainerd. It's a fun story; one I'm sure I can work into a sermon someday!

Michelle and I were married in 2002. Our son Elija came along the following year, and Sophia was born three years later. Elija loves baseball and machines that fly. He says he wants to be a Coast Guard helicopter pilot someday. Sophia loves horses, puppies and art. She says she wants to be a veterinarian with an art studio someday.

For the past five years Michelle and I have been teaching internationally. Our first three years overseas were in South Korea. It was an amazing cultural experience. I taught science and drama while Michelle coordinated the special needs program in our school. We found an amazing church home in a large Korean Methodist church with a small English congregation. I'd felt that I had a calling into ministry for some time, but while in Korea our pastor, a woman named Dr. Yani Yoo, began to really encourage me to pray and think seriously about it. The Holy Spirit, who was of course working in me all along, rekindled the calling I'd felt as a child into a flame.

Our last two years have been in Macedonia at the QSI International School of Skopje. Michelle teaches second grade while I am teaching a variety of middle school subjects. The modern Republic of Macedonia is formerly part of Yugoslavia and the northern half of the kingdom of Alexander the Great. While here, I started pastoral ministry training through the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ via distance learning. Michelle and the kids and I are active with other Christian

Confirmation students were asked the question, "Why is church important for a community?"

Here is their answer: "Church is important for the community because we get to have fellowship with one another and find out needs of people to pray for for the week. Churches also have valuable people that volunteer to help out elder people in our community by taking them to appointments and bringing them meals if they need. Church also brings people together to rejoice in God and open our hearts to Him.

choose to stay the winter, but it seems that spring has re-energized them, too, as they prepare for the plethora of summer activities including the EARLY morning service on the rocks at Baraga's Cross, the special summer services, and bringing their faith into the community supporting Birch Grove (youngers and elders), working together to be a beacon of hope on the north shore.

Thank you for allowing me to be a part of your lives and your ministry. Thanks for keeping me warm and welcomed. Thank you for being great cooks and bakers. (I am sure I have gained a few pounds especially during Lent!). Thank you for your patience with EvaLyn and letting her walk this interim path with you including Bible Study, Kids Bible Klub, and Holy Humor Sunday!

It would take many pages of writing to remind you of all you do in ministry on the Shore. So next time you feel discouraged and say "we are such a little church" remember what Jesus did with just 12 Disciples...what David did with one little act of bravery...what you can do to make a difference in your corner of the world.

Blessings to all of you! Harry the almost retired mouse.

**JOIN US AT THE TOFTE
4TH OF JULY FESTIVITIES
STOP AT THE ZOAR CHURCH BOOTH
FOR BRATS, HOT DOGS, AND SODA!
11:00 A.M. -3:00 P.M.**

WHY COOK DINNER???
**COME TO THE SPAGHETTI FEAST
ON THE 4TH OF JULY 5 – 7 P.M.**

WHERE: ZOAR CHURCH
Conveniently located close to Tofte Park.
Free Parking and just a short walk to the park
for the fireworks display scheduled to begin at dusk!

\$5.00 OR FREE WILL OFFERING

SEE YOU THERE!!!
Supplemental funding provided by Thrivent North Shore Chapter
#3133

Thank you to all those who have chosen Zoar Lutheran Church as the recipient of Thrivent Choice Dollars. Since the beginning of this program, Zoar Lutheran Church has received \$14,837. What a positive support of our on-going work!

A View from the Pew

by Marsha Hanson

Mention Joyce Kreuger, and those who know her immediately think of a lovely lady who plays glorious music. So entwined are Joyce and piano music, that it's difficult to think of her apart from the piano.

There is good reason for that strong bond; Joyce's affinity for the keyboard began early on. When she was only four years old, Joyce was already picking out tunes on her grandma's pump organ. Her other grandma had a piano. Joyce, therefore, began early to develop her ear and finger skills. Joyce's parents encouraged her musical endeavors. Her father, Arvid Nelson, played the accordion, and her mother, Amy played the piano. The couple provided much appreciated musical talent for community gatherings at Maple Hill.

As Joyce grew in her ability as an accomplished musician, she was often called upon to provide music at school programs and assemblies. She even played background music for people to rollerskate. As a young adult, Joyce was pianist in the popular local band, "Three Flats and A Sharp". Rod Krueger played bass guitar, with Jack Blackwell on Sax, and Ev Bushman on clarinet. Later, Joyce was a member of another popular group with Bill Tormondsen on coronet, Larry Carlson on accordion, and Rod Krueger on Bass Guitar. Today, Joyce continues to bless others with her musical talent by playing for services at Zoar Lutheran Church either with a group or as a soloist. Joyce also plays music for the residents of the care center in Grand Marais. If one compliments Joyce on her abilities, she is always quick to say, "It's a gift. I don't even know how I do it, but God has put that ability in me." She consistently gives glory to God for her piano skills. As one spends time with Joyce, it becomes clear where her strength comes from. She is a woman of prayer and of the Word of God. She is a prayer partner who takes seriously any request for prayer. As a result, many people--family, friends and even strangers-- call upon her for prayer. Joyce's home is a welcoming haven for family and friends and Joyce stays in daily contact with her children and other family members. Definitely a "people person", she continues to nurture and encourage all who keep in touch with her. We are indeed blessed to have this lovely, and loving lady among us!

Anyone who engages in conversation with Joyce will soon learn how dear her family is to her. It's almost a given that any visit with Joyce will bring forth some information or anecdotes about family members. Rightly so. Joyce was raised in a close-knit family with siblings Eleanor, Ardis, and Roger. They all loved music, singing together, and just enjoyed each other's company.

Communities here including a Macedonian Methodist congregation and the International Church of Skoppje (Pastor Brian's church). We've also learned a lot of Christian history and early western culture. With the same greeting I began this letter, the apostle Paul greeted the new followers of "The Way" around the Mediterranean and Aegean Seas 2000 years ago. One of those new churches was in Phillippi, just a few hours from where I am writing this today. I can't help but marvel at how the Good News has travelled from here throughout the world, including to Norway, and from there to Tofte, Minnesota.

I believe that Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior. I believe that we are called by Him to live out our faith in service to our neighbor while we share His message of hope. I believe God works in our lives in great and mysterious ways and I am excited to have been led by Him to serve with you there in Tofte.

I'd like to thank Pastor EvaLyn for her work as interim pastor, along with Judy Gregg, the congregational president, Eric Iversen, who served as the chair of the call committee, and all of the members of Zoar who have demonstrated your care and concern for me and my family as we have begun this transition. We look forward to our arrival in July and meeting you all!

In Him,
Darin

After many years of using the Lutheran Book of Worship hymn books, we have now changed to the Lutheran hymnal for church and home Reclaim. Anyone who donated the Lutheran Book of Worship in memory of someone, or just donated one to the church may get their donated hymnal back. A free-will offering is appreciated, but not necessary. All donations will go toward the purchase of the new Reclaim hymnals. Names of those who donated the Lutheran Book of Worship hymnals will be recorded in the Zoar Historical Book. However, we cannot keep all of the hymnals, so please let us know if you would like yours. The hymnals will be kept until October 1, 2015.

Anyone who would like to donate prizes for Bingo for the Fourth of July Celebration at Tofte Park, please call Zoar Church at 663-7925. Or, email Zoarlcb@boreal.org. Write us at PO Box 2098 Tofte, MN 55615 We need to have the prizes at Zoar Church no later than July 2nd. The church office is open on Wednesdays and Fridays from 10:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m.