



January Newsletter

Zoar Baptist Church

Happy New Year, Zoar family!

There is something special about turning the calendar page. A new year brings fresh routines, new goals, and a sense of reset. But as believers, we know our deepest hope is not found in a date on the wall. Our hope is found in a God who makes all things new and whose mercies are new every morning.

As we step into 2026 together, I want to frame this year with a simple church-wide theme: *Explore Zoar: Discover Faith, Community, and Purpose*. This is more than a slogan. It is a prayer.

- **Discover Faith:** Not just knowing facts about God, but growing in trust, obedience, and love for Jesus. For the unbeliever it's coming to know Jesus as Lord and Savior.
- **Discover Community:** Not just attending services, but belonging, serving, encouraging, and carrying burdens together.
- **Discover Purpose:** Not just living week to week, but walking in the calling God has placed on your life.

If you are new to Zoar, this is a perfect time to step in. If you have been here for years, this is a perfect time to step deeper. One of the easiest ways to do that is simply to stay connected: worship faithfully, attend Sunday School, participate in MidWeek, and find a place to serve. Spiritual growth rarely happens by accident. It happens when we consistently put ourselves where God is working.

As your pastor, I also want to say this clearly: you do not have to start 2026 with everything figured out. Some of you are coming into this year with joy and momentum. Others are coming in tired, grieving, worried, or stretched thin. The good news is that God meets us where we are, not where we pretend to be. And He is faithful to lead us forward one step at a time.

So let us begin the year with a simple prayer in our hearts:

“Lord, help me explore what You are doing in my life and in my church. Help me discover faith that is real, community that is strong, and purpose that is clear.”

I am thankful for you, I am excited about what God will do in 2026, and I am honored to walk into this new year with you.

In Christ, *Pastor Jon*





2026



Anniversaries:

Mickey and Paulette Bradley - 01/08



Birthdays:

Jamie Jones - **01/12**

Allen Hester - **01/16**

Lynn Winecoff - **01/17**

Caleb Payseur - **01/21**

Kentin Humes - **01/22**

Barbara Rogers - **01/23**

Vicki Willis - **01/23**

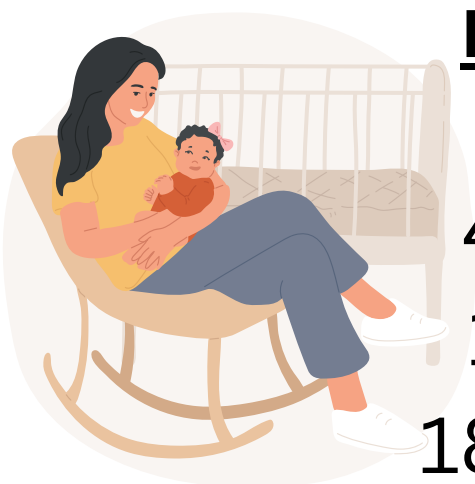
Amelia Poston - **01/26**

Sandra Brooks - **01/28**

Kristin Blanton - **01/29**

Mike Webber - **01/30**

Ray McSwain - **01/31**



Nursery Volunteer **January:**

4- Lorraine West

11- Glenda Allen

18- Sherry Blanton

25- Melody Gamble

Children Volunteer **January:**

4-Doris Swafford

11-Rhonda Newton

18-Cindy & Bryan

25-Family Worship



Activities

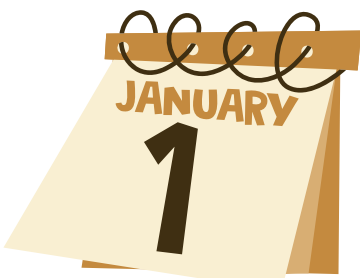
2026

NEW WEBSITE



<https://zoarchurch.com/>

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Dates:



NEW YEAR'S LUNCH!

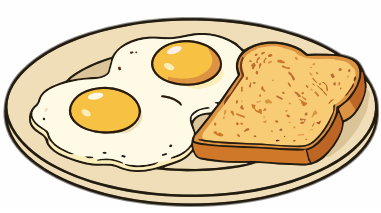
- Thursday, January 1 · Church New Year Lunch
- Sunday, January 4 · Care Meeting
- Wednesday, January 7 · Midweek starts
- Friday, January 16 · Kids Lock-In
- Saturday, January 17 · Men's Breakfast
- Sunday, January 18 · Church Council Meeting
- Saturday, February 14 · Valentine's Banquet

Please join us for lunch on New Year's Day as we celebrate another year of our Lord! The Deacons are providing the ribs, pulled pork, and turkey.

If you can bring your favorite New Year's side dish and a dessert, that would be great. If not, please come join us anyway, and we will have lunch together!



Friday, Jan 16 · Kids Lock-IN with breakfast at Midnight



MID-WEEK WEDNESDAYS

STARTS BACK JAN 7, 2026

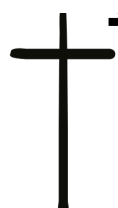
- > MEAL 5:45 PM
- > ADULT SERIES 6:30 PM
- > YOUTH, KIDS & NURSERY 6:30 PM

Something for everyone!
Come & plug in!



Mid-Week starts back on Wednesday, January 7 at 6:30 pm. Doors open for the meal at 5:45. Come & Plug in! There's something for everyone!

-If you or your Sunday school class would like to volunteer to help serve, please see Kyle Jenkins



Mission Action Committee Report:

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!

EXCITING ANNOUNCEMENT: I want to acknowledge the hard work and leadership of Sherry Blanton and Pastor Jon. Starting back in late 2024 we were discussing how to improve funding and keeping the food closet better stocked and helping in the backpack ministry when food was low. Sherry and Pastor Jon suggested they go to the Dover Foundation and request a grant for our needs to support hunger in our community. The Dover Foundation awarded our church with a \$5,000 grant from that request and those funds have served us well supporting the food closet, backpack ministry and community meals such as the Easter meal and the block party. We used those funds wisely throughout 2025 and we are getting low now. But, Sherry and Pastor Jon again wanted to continue with grant requests where possible and another local group called the Bailey Endowment was discussed and approved for requesting another grant request. Using the recorded stats of 2025 and the impact those Dover funds had on these mission efforts they applied for another \$8,000 grant. We were blessed again with a recent notice of approval from the Bailey Endowment. We are very grateful for what Sherry and Pastor Jon have done to make a big difference in Zoar's mission efforts to feed and provide needed food for those in our community who are facing real hunger almost every day in many cases. We are also very grateful for all the food donations we get from our church family who provide regular support and nonperishable food donations to the food closet and backpack ministries. We are most grateful to God for giving us a missional heart as a church family that results in missions such as these ministries. To God be the glory and that He continues to find us worthy. Let's continue to be in prayer for His guiding hand in 2026.

The food closet demand has leveled off and we are very grateful for all the donations of nonperishable food and dry goods donated. Your donations provided food for several families who were in desperate need for food. We provided food to hungry community members of all ages. Ingles donated several food bags and we are expecting food box donations from our local Food Lion as well. The Dover Foundation grant is almost depleted which went a long way to sustaining our food closet for the year. We applied for and were approved another grant from the Wright Foundation for 2026. God is providing all our needs every day. We are very grateful and give Him all the glory for making a difference in our community. God has provided food to over 450 hungry neighbors of Zoar during 2025 so far this year.

Our partnership with Shelby Middle School (SMS) has flourished this year because of the mission heart God has given us. Over 420 backpack bags were prepared and provided to twelve students throughout 2025. All the leaders, staff and teachers were treated to monthly treats and breakfast. We do an annual prayer walk through the school and we include James Love and North schools in 2025. Each backpack is packed with 24 various food items each week. The students are selected by the school's social service worker where hunger is recognized discreetly and the information is held confidentially. Thank you to all who participate in the important mission effort. Pray for all our school leaders, staff, teachers and students.

Thank you all for your prayers, support, volunteer time, and generous donations! PRAY FOR OUR COUNTRY, OUR LEADERS AT EVERY LEVEL, OUR LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS AND FIRST RESPONDERS, IT'S ALL ABOUT JESUS.

How can you share the gift of salvation with others for the New Year?

- Be the hands and feet of Jesus Christ.
- Help those who are hungry and in need.
- Share a smile and kind words with others.
- Volunteer your time and talents, remember what Jesus tells us about our fruits and humble hearts.
- Pray every day for those in our community who do not know Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior.

Donations are always needed for the NC Baptist on Missions for WNC residents who are in desperate need. Link to donate:

<https://baptistsonmission.org/> Mission-Projects/By-Mission- Type/Disaster- Relief/Hurricane-Helene



2025 Recap- Events that we are very grateful for everyone's help and for all our volunteers who participated

- Lottie Moon Offering
- Annie Armstrong Offering
- North Carolina Missions Offering
- Hurricane Helene Disaster Relief
- Ladies Mission Projects and Events
- Men's Mission Projects and Breakfast
- Operation Christmas Child, Samaritan's Purse
- West Virginia Sock Ministry
- Community Block Party
- Greatest Treat Mission
- Easter Egg Flashlight Egg Hunt and Meal
- Volunteering at various mission event in our community, Shelby Mission Camp and others
- Angel Tree mission project

Your Mission Team, Jon Jones, Martha Ledford, Nina Willis, Billy and Sherry Blanton, Eddie Winecoff, Mickey and Paulette Bradley