



# The Abounding Joy Herald

Gathering in Joy - Reaching Out with God's Love  
Thursday, January 11, 2024



## ***The Second Sunday after the Epiphany, Jan. 14, 2024***

***Worship is at 10:00 am***

Three Worship Options: In-Person, Drive-in (88.5 FM), Video Message

**GOD'S WORD** Sunday's sermon will be posted to our church website and at [www.ajlcmc.org](http://www.ajlcmc.org) as soon as possible. Prepare your hearts for worship on Sunday, January 14, and read: 1 Samuel 3:1-10; Psalm 139:1-10; and John 1:43-51.

**ADULT FORUM STUDY** This Sunday at 9 a.m., we continue the Bible study titled, "Called." In these sessions, we look into the letter to the Ephesians at how we are *called* by God, *called* to faith, *called* to service, and *called* to share, with the help of Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler. This study is free to us through Lutheran Hour Ministries. Join us on Sunday mornings in the Fellowship area.

**IN OUR PRAYERS:** *Joshua Claseman, Jeffery Karbedeh, Ken Lucy, Doug Morey, Barrett* (Deb Hendrickson's brother), *Jim* (Joyce Cass's, Jeanie Frolander's, and Joanie Peterson's brother), *John* (Marie Neumann's brother), *Sandy* (Anna Bleess-Lahr's sister), *Albert* (Ron & Madge Rowe's brother-in-law), *Sue* (Anna Bleess-Lahr's sister-in-law), *Denny* (Anna Bleess-Lahr's children's father), and *Clayton* (Dan & Belinda Tysver's friend).

**PRAYER REQUESTS** may be made by a request to our Prayer Team coordinator Betty Batdorf: 320-291-5141 and/or [AJ.prayers@ajlcmc.org](mailto:AJ.prayers@ajlcmc.org). She contacts the prayer team for prayer. Daily prayer will be offered for one month. If you wish to have continued prayer, please submit a new request.

**INTERCESSORY PRAYER GROUP** meets on Thursdays at 9:00 am at Abounding Joy. We invite you to join our intercessory prayer group led by Pastor Deb Peterson. We believe that we are called to not only pray FOR others, but to go into our community and pray WITH others. For more information contact Pastor Deb Peterson at 320-250-0647.

**ANNUAL MEETING** The Abounding Joy Annual Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, February 4, 2024, following our worship service. If you have something to prepare for the Annual Report, those reports are due to the office by January 19.

**MEN'S FAITH TALK** meets at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesdays. Come for some Bible focused discussion. ALL MEN are invited and encouraged to be part of this gathering.

### **HAPPY BIRTHDAY to:**

John Kokula, Saturday, Jan. 13  
Bill Latare, Sunday, Jan. 14  
Misty Hahn-Schultz, Sunday, Jan. 14  
Mike March, Monday, Jan. 15  
Laurie Lucy, Tuesday, Jan. 16  
Dana Blais, Thursday, Jan. 18  
Bruce Peterson, Thursday, Jan. 18



### **RECENT WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES**

Belated Happy Anniversary to:  
Mark and Misty Schultz, Monday, Jan. 1,  
Dean and Penny Peterson, Tuesday, Jan. 2,  
Tom and Pris Krieg, Thursday, Jan. 4, and  
Brian and Mickey Frank, Sunday, Jan. 7.  
God's blessings to these couples as they marked this important milestone in their lives.

**"THE RUTHLESS ELIMINATION OF HURRY"** This Lent, we're going to join together as a church to read and study this book by John Mark Comer. The book challenges us to see who we are becoming, and invites us to follow Jesus. Before Sunday, January 28th, you are encouraged to sign-up for pre-orders of the book (\$10). There are also study materials available to get more out of this book. Contact Pastor Brandon if you would like to use these resources for your group, or if you would like to start a group for Lent. Please sign-up to get your copy and join in the study!

**USHERS and READERS** Those of you who are willing volunteers to Usher and/or be a Sunday morning Scripture Reader, please check the Info table. There are sign-up sheets for 2024 Ushers and Readers. Your help in filling these positions for the next few months is deeply appreciated!

**VISITATION TEAM** Pastor Brandon is looking to gather together folks who would be interested in calling on or visiting shut-in members to check on them or bring them communion. If this is you, please sign up (sign-up sheet available on Info Table) or contact Pastor Brandon about your interest. In the next couple of weeks, we'll figure out a time to get together and even share some ideas.

### God's Word is Powerful and Sufficient

In 2024, I've decided I'd like to read through the Bible again. I've been steadily working my way through it with the help of a reading plan. As I was reading today, I was reminded of a video I saw recently put together by The Bible Project (if you're unfamiliar with them, check out their work at [bibleproject.com](https://bibleproject.com)).

In this video devotion, the focus was on the words God says of Himself when He meets with Moses in Exodus 34:5-7. In that passage, we read these words, "Then the LORD came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the LORD. And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, 'The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation.'" (NIV Translation)

As Michael Card notes in his book, *Inexpressible*, "The order is significant. Notice the first word is not holiness or power but compassion...It is linked to the [Hebrew] word *rechem* or 'womb' and connotes the love elicited by a helpless baby from a mother or father." Further, if we look at the English definition, we see that compassion is to see another, feel with them in their situation, and do something about it. To put it simply, it is love in action."

I find it significant that of all the places God could start in defining His character, He starts with compassion. Though God is love, He is first and foremost filled with compassion. In meditating on this news, I am reminded of the profound love God has for me, and this news has empowered my prayer life.

Prayer invites us to be still and pay attention to what God is doing. We are invited to look intently at Jesus. In Jesus, this characteristic was displayed fully. In seeing Jesus' compassion, our prayers are to be empowered and our faith is strengthened.

One scene when Jesus showed His compassion involved a guy by the name of Bartimaeus (found in Mark 10:46-52). Bartimaeus was blind and helpless. The people also shunned their eyes away from him, even trying to shut him up because they felt Jesus was far too important for him.

But what does Jesus do? He calls Bartimaeus to Him. Jesus draws Bartimaeus to Him. He sees Bartimaeus, He feels with Bartimaeus, and He does something about it. Notice how Jesus doesn't assume what Bartimaeus wants. Instead, Jesus asks him a very deep and personal question, "What do you want me to do for you?"

Bartimaeus offers up his "prayer" to see. As Jesus listens to and acts for this helpless one, Jesus has compassion on Bartimaeus. Jesus' love is put in action, and Bartimaeus is healed! Bartimaeus then joins in the crowd and follows Jesus. Bartimaeus is never the same again because he has experienced the compassion of God.

In prayer, we, too, become open to experience the compassion of God. We are reminded that we are seen, loved, and acted for in Jesus. When we start our prayers from this place of professing God's character that we have received, it empowers our prayers and strengthens our faith.

This year, what if we learned how to pray in such a way so as to experience that compassion in new and wonderful ways? May Jesus show you how He can answer your prayers like He did for Bartimaeus. May this year truly change your life through His love in action. *Pastor Brandon*

**CAMP RECHARGE** : There is still time to register for Family Camp Recharge at Mount Carmel. This is a 4-day retreat for the entire family (or individuals) and a wonderful opportunity to spend a weekend growing in faith together with family and check out what Mount Carmel is all about. The Recharge retreat takes place over President's Day, February 16-19 in Alexandria, MN.

**ESTIMATE OF GIVING** cards and Time and Abilities sheets for 2024 are now overdue, however, we'll still accept and record them. Please return them as soon as possible. These sheets help us know the areas in which we can connect you to serve in our congregation. *Thank you!*

**WE HAVE SNOW!** SNOW TUBING at Powder Ridge will be on Sunday, February 4th from 3-5 PM for anyone age 4 and older. The cost will be \$15 per person. You can pay in advance—just drop payment at the church office or you can pay the day of the event. Let Tim know by January 31st if able to attend.

Sunday, Jan. 07, 2024

ATTENDANCE: 128

OFFERINGS

General \$6,940

Building/Mortgage \$715

## *This Week at Abounding Joy*

Thursday, Jan. 11

6:30 pm Choir Rehearsal

The Second Sunday after the Epiphany Sunday, Jan. 14

9:00 am Education Hour—Sunday School, Adult Forum

10:00 am Worship Service

11:00 am Fellowship and Refreshments

2:30-5:00 pm Every Tribe and Tongue Worship

Tuesday, Jan. 16

6:30 pm Men's Ensemble Rehearsal

Wednesday, Jan. 17

9:00 am Men's Faith Talk

Noon Bible Study

1:15 pm Joyful Stitchers Quilt-tying and Binding

4:30 pm Church Council Meeting

6:30 pm Acoustic Joy Rehearsal

Thursday, Jan. 18

9:00 am Intercessory Prayer Group Meets

6:30 pm Choir Rehearsal

### ***The Abounding Joy Foundation***

Brad Lundquist, President

Deb Hendrickson

Rick Bellrichard, Vice President

Al Kutz

Dan Tysver, Treasurer

Wally Osterholt

Greg Norman, Secretary

Pastor Brandon Foster, Non-voting member

### ***Abounding Joy Lutheran Church***

LCMC - Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ ([www.lcmc.net](http://www.lcmc.net))

NALC - North American Lutheran Church ([www.theNALC.org](http://www.theNALC.org))

**Ministers:** All the people of *Abounding Joy*

Pastor Brandon Foster

Pastor Brandon's contact info: (701) 446-7561 email: [Pastor.Brandon@ajlcmc.org](mailto:Pastor.Brandon@ajlcmc.org)

**Director of Youth and Family Ministries:** Tim Knorek

Tim's contact info: (507) 508-4128 email: [tknorek@ajlcmc.org](mailto:tknorek@ajlcmc.org)

**Church Secretary:** Marilyn Schultz

**Custodian:** Al Kutz

**Minister of Music:** Ginny Shimota

**Acoustic Joy Directors:** Roger DeBoer and Cindi Rhoe

**The Church Council** welcomes your feedback and suggestions.

Kim Mielke, President   Jim Tuorila, Vice-President   Jeanie Frolander, Secretary   Bruce Peterson, Treasurer  
Steve Hancock   Deb Hendrickson   Dennis Holland   Marc Schrantz   Darlene Stover

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Office Hours: Tuesday-Friday, 9:00 am-2:00 pm