



The Abounding Joy Herald

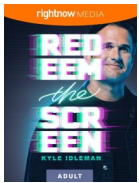
Thursday, September 25, 2025



Gathering in Joy - Reaching Out with God's Love Sunday, September 28, 2025

SUNDAY'S WORSHIP SERVICE live stream can be found on the Abounding Joy website (aboundingjoy.org) and click on Videos. Prepare your hearts for worship on Sunday, September 28th and read Genesis 12:1-3, 1 Corinthians 9:19-25, and Matthew 28:18-20..

ADULT EDUCATION: We invite all of you to join us in the Fellowship Area at 9 a.m. as we finish the study titled "Redeem The Screen" by Kyle Idleman. Here's a little preview of this three-week study: Our screens dominate our lives. In a unique way, they hold the power to bring us together yet can also keep us isolated from those physically around us. With a click, we can connect with family and friends or join a debate over an issue that interests us. Screens bring information and inspiration, but they can also carry temptations and stresses. Pastor Kyle Idleman wants to teach us how to redeem our screens. Join him as he applies the truths of Romans 12 to our lives, showing us the power of Jesus to transform us. Rather than allowing our screens to conform us to the world, in Jesus we can make screens a tool to change the world.



IN OUR PRAYERS: Penny Peterson, Joyce Cass, Kathy Erickson, Marlys Hopke, Jeffrey Karbedeh, Ken Lucy, Arne Moe, Steve Sarff, Ginny Shimota, Darlene (Glen Rey's sister), Jean and Paula (Ron Stewart's sisters), Jim (Jeanie Frolander's, Joanie Peterson's, & Joyce Cass's brother), Kim (Karen Greenwaldt's brother), Karen (Deb Peterson's sister), Kathy (Bill Latore's daughter), Cody (Carole Martin's son-in-law), Joe (Holly Olson's uncle), Judy (Pr. Tom Stover's aunt), Mary (Dave & Karen Greenwaldt's sister-in-law), Mitch (Tammy Holland's nephew), Jenni (Mary Windels' cousin), Doug (Mary Windels' cousin's husband), Justin and Megan (Cori Schrantz's friends), Blake (Max Olson's school friend), Dennis (Carl & Betty Batdorf's friend), Doug (Tim Carlson's friend), John (Scot & Holly Olson's friend), Ross (Glen & Margaret Rey's friend), and Sean (Al Kutz's friend).

LADIES' NOON LUNCHEON is tomorrow, Friday, September 26th, at noon at Jimmy's Pour House (22 2nd Ave N, Sauk Rapids). Call B.J. Peterson if you missed the sign-up and would like to attend. All Abounding Joy ladies and friends are welcome.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY to

Jeanie Frolander, Thursday, Sept. 25
Sandy Stewart, Saturday, Sept. 27
Aayan Syed, Saturday, Sept. 27
Luke Blais, Monday, Sept. 29
Natalie Foster, Tuesday, Sept. 30

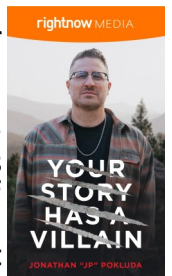


HAPPY ANNIVERSARY to:

Paul and Michelle Tomsche celebrating their 38th wedding anniversary on Friday, Sept. 26th and Llauren and Jean Nelson marking 51 years of marriage on Sunday, Sept. 28th. May God's blessings be upon these couples as they celebrate this milestone in their lives.

OCTOBER SERMON SERIES AND ADULT EDUCATION

STUDY This October, we are going to take a look at the unseen realm. As Christians, we believe there is a supernatural world around us and it has impacts on our daily lives. "Your Story Has A Villain" by Jonathan "JP" Pokluda helps us understand a little more about the warfare that goes on and our call as Christians to fight against the work of our enemy. Over the course of these weeks, we'll learn in services about the "Unseen Battles" and in Adult Education, we'll understand how God has equipped us for these times. Join us in this study.



DISCOVERY HOUR If you have interest in joining our congregation or just wish to learn more about us and our mission, please attend the Discovery Hour Sunday, October 12th, at 4:00 pm. There is a sign-up sheet on the Info Table or contact Pastor to get further info.

PRAYER REQUESTS may be made to our volunteer Prayer Team Coordinator Pr. Deb Peterson: debp.prayerchain@outlook.com and/or 320-250-0647 or by using a purple request sheets found either on the info table or in the black attendance folder. 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.

REMINDER The deadline to turn in announcements to Pastor Brandon for the upcoming weekend is Friday mornings at 10 a.m.

God's Word is Powerful and Sufficient

This past weekend in our sermon series "We Are The Church," I reminded us that when we care for people, people sense that they belong in the church. This is a powerful and important reminder for us of how God works in and through our active witness.

As I was preparing, I came across the following story. It didn't quite work out to share it in the sermon, but I thought this would be a great spot for it. This week, instead of thinking about awkward matters, let this be a reminder of the power of love shown through care that brings belonging:

I never dreamed that taking a child to Disney World could be so difficult — or that such a trip could teach me so much about God's outrageous grace.

Our middle daughter had been previously adopted by another family. I [Timothy] am sure this couple had the best of intentions, but they never quite integrated the adopted child into their family of biological children. After a couple of rough years, they dissolved the adoption, and we ended up welcoming an eight-year-old girl into our home.

For one reason or another, whenever our daughter's previous family vacationed at Disney World, they took their biological children with them, but they left their adopted daughter with a family friend. Usually — at least in the child's mind — this happened because she did something wrong that precluded her presence on the trip.

And so, by the time we adopted our daughter, she had seen many pictures of Disney World and she had heard about the rides and the characters and the parades. But when it came to passing through the gates of the Magic Kingdom, she had always been the one left on the outside. Once I found out about this history, I made plans to take her to Disney World the next time a speaking engagement took our family to the southeastern United States.

I thought I had mastered the Disney World drill. I knew from previous experiences that the prospect of seeing cast members in freakishly oversized mouse and duck costumes somehow turns children into squirming bundles of emotional instability. What I didn't expect was that the prospect of visiting this dreamworld would produce a stream of downright devilish behavior in our newest daughter. In the month leading up to our trip to the Magic Kingdom, she stole food when a simple request would have gained her a snack. She lied when it would have been easier to tell the truth. She whispered insults that were carefully crafted to hurt her older sister as deeply as possible — and, as the days on the calendar moved closer to the trip, her mutinies multiplied.

A couple of days before our family headed to Florida, I pulled our daughter into my lap to talk through her latest escapade. "I know what you're going to do," she stated flatly. "You're not going to take me to Disney World, are you?" The thought hadn't actually crossed my mind, but her downward spiral suddenly started to make some sense. She knew she couldn't earn her way into the Magic Kingdom — she had tried and failed that test several times before — so she was living in a way that placed her as far as possible from the most magical place on earth.

In retrospect, I'm embarrassed to admit that, in that moment, I was tempted to turn her fear to my own advantage. The easiest response would have been, "If you don't start behaving better, you're right, we won't take you" — but, by God's grace, I didn't. Instead, I asked her, "Is this trip something we're doing as a family?"

She nodded, brown eyes wide and tear-rimmed.

"Are you part of this family?"

She nodded again.

"Then you're going with us. Sure, there may be some consequences to help you remember what's right and what's wrong — but you're part of our family, and we're not leaving you behind."

I'd like to say that her behaviors grew better after that moment. They didn't. Her choices pretty much spiraled out of control at every hotel and rest stop all the way to Lake Buena Vista. Still, we headed to Disney World on the day we had promised, and it was a typical Disney day. Overpriced tickets, overpriced meals, and lots of lines, mingled with just enough manufactured magic to consider maybe going again someday.

In our hotel room that evening, a very different child emerged. She was exhausted, pensive, and a little weepy at times, but her month-long facade of rebellion had faded. When bedtime rolled around, I prayed with her, held her, and asked, "So how was your first day at Disney World?"

She closed her eyes and snuggled down into her stuffed unicorn. After a few moments, she opened her eyes ever so slightly. "Daddy," she said, "I finally got to go to Disney World. But it wasn't because I was good; it's because I'm yours."

It wasn't because I was good; it's because I'm yours. That's the message of outrageous grace.

Outrageous grace isn't a favor you can achieve by being good; it's the gift you receive by being God's. Outrageous grace is God's goodness that comes looking for you when you have nothing but a middle finger flipped in the face of God to offer in return. It's a farmer paying a full day's wages to a crew of deadbeat day laborers with only a single hour punched on their time cards (Matthew 20:1–16). It's a man marrying an abandoned woman and then refusing to forsake his covenant with her when she turns out to be a whore (Ezekiel 16:8–63; Hosea 1:1–3:5). It's the insanity of a shepherd who puts ninety-nine sheep at risk to rescue the single lamb that's too stupid to stay with the flock (Luke 15:1–7). It's the love of a father who hands over his finest rings and robes to a young man who has squandered his inheritance on drunken binges with his fair-weather friends (Luke 15:11–32)...It's one-way love that calls you into the kingdom not because you've been good but because God has chosen you and made you His own. And now He is chasing you to the ends of the earth to keep you as His child, and nothing in heaven or hell can ever stop Him...

But here's what's amazing about God's outrageous grace: This isn't merely what God the Father would do; it's what He did do. God could have chosen to save anyone, everyone, or no one from Adam's fallen race. But what God did was to choose a multi-hued multitude of "someones," and — if you are a believer in Jesus Christ — one of those "someones" was you. God in Christ has declared over you, *"I could have chosen anyone in the whole world as my child, and I chose you. No matter what you say or do, neither my love nor my choice will ever change."* That's grace that's truly amazing.

From "PROOF: Finding Freedom through the Intoxicating Joy of Irresistible Grace" by Daniel Montgomery and Timothy Paul Jones

Pastor Brandon

CALLING ALL WILLING AND ABLE 'CHURCH MICE'

The parking lot rock areas are sporting some unattractive and undesirable growth. If you would be available to help clean up these areas, please let it be known on the sign-up sheet on the Info Table and Greg Voller will organize a time to work together to keep our grounds in tip-top shape!

WOW (Women of the Word) Small Group Bible

Study will start in October. The study books, *"Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World": Finding intimacy with God in the busyness of life* by Joanna Weaver, have arrived and are in the Office. Cost is \$10 payable to WOW.

MEN'S FAITH TALK

meets every Wednesday morning at 9:00 in the Journey Room. In February 2018, a seed was planted to start a Men's Bible Study to meet every Wednesday morning for an hour (or longer if you wish to continue the discussion). This group formed, grew, and transitioned into the Men's Faith Talk. They gather to study the scriptures, discuss present day issues, or chose a specific Bible-based study or video series. Guys, you are welcome to come every week or once in a while when your schedule allows. You will receive a warm welcome whenever you can join in; and, the morning coffee is always hot!



RIGHT NOW MEDIA We have partnered with Right

Now Media to offer you (FREE) over 20,000 resources of great Christian content to help you grow your faith in Christ. Scan the QR code or go to

<https://app.rightnowmedia.org/joinaboundingjoy>.

NOTE: You'll find the "Your Story Has A Villian" series on RightNow media.

OUR e-GIVING PLATFORM

If you choose to give your offering electronically, you can give at this secure link <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-ZN68/> or use the QR code. Whether you choose to give online or in person, we are grateful for your generosity and commitment.



ABOUNDING JOY CAPITAL EXPENSE FUND

Help us build up our Abounding Joy Capital Expense Fund (formerly Building Fund) so that we can prepare for Abounding Joy's Future. Our goal is to reach \$250,000! *NOTE: You do not have to write this lengthy name on your contribution envelopes. Just use the "Building Fund" line already on there and it'll get deposited to the correct account.*



We're enthusiastically getting ready for this event. Come, join in the fun!

SALE dates are:

Wed., Oct. 8, 4-7 pm Pre-sale (\$2.00 charge for pre-sale shopping);

Thurs., Oct. 9, 8 am-5 pm; and

Fri., Oct 10, 8 am-Noon. All proceeds from the freewill donations will go to Terebinth Refuge and Abounding Joy's Youth and Family Ministry.

DROP-OFF dates are:

Mon., Oct. 6, 2-5 pm;

Tues. Oct. 7, 9 am -1 & 2-6 pm;

Wed., Oct. 8, 8 am-noon.

A list of suggested items to donate is available on the rummage sale table by the fireplace along with sign-up sheets of areas where you may help with the sale. If you have a free hour or 2, please sign up and join us as we work together on this fun fundraiser!

Sale of raffle tickets started last Sunday and will continue through the last day of the rummage sale. Tickets are \$1 each. Raffle items (2 small-size quilts and a 2017 Twins "Prince" umbrella) are on display in the Fellowship Area.

Now would be a great time to do some church building clean-out! We suggest that if you have things stored upstairs and/or other areas of the building, you check through those areas for items you longer use. Then please donate them to the sale! Thank you!

Please contact Amy Krystosek (320-282-2809) with any questions.

Sunday, September 21, 2025

ATTENDANCE: 121

OFFERING: Gen: \$1,988
AJ Capital Expense Fund: \$2,950

This Week at Abounding Joy

Friday, September 26

Noon Ladies' Luncheon @ Jimmy's Pour House, Sauk Rapids

Sunday, September 28

9:00 am Sunday School Classes (ages 3-6th grade and adult)/Confirmation Class

10:00 am Worship Service with Men's Ensemble

11:00 am Fellowship and Refreshments

2:30-5:00 pm Every Tribe & Tongue

Monday, September 29

6:30 pm Chime Choir

Tuesday, September 30

6:30 pm Men's Ensemble

Wednesday, October 1

9:00 am Men's Faith Talk

10:15 am Rummage Sale Team Meeting

Noon Bible Study

1:15 pm Joyful Stitches Quilt-tying and Binding

6:00 pm Youth Group

Thursday, October 2

9:00 am Intercessory Prayer

6:30 pm Choir Rehearsal—Off-site (Ginny's house)

Sunday, October 5

9:00 am Education Hour/Confirmation Class

10:00 am Worship Service

11:00 am Confirmand Meeting

11:00 am Fellowship and Refreshments

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

4:00 pm LCMC Annual Gathering Registration opens, Lakeville, MN

The Abounding Joy Foundation

Brad Lundquist, President

Carl Batdorf, Vice President

Greg Norman, Secretary

Bruce Peterson, Treasurer

Dennis Holland, Council Representative

Dale Hellickson, Member at Large

Deb Hendrickson, Member at Large

Pastor Brandon Foster, Ex Officio member

Abounding Joy Lutheran Church

LCMC - Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (www.lcmc.net)

NALC - North American Lutheran Church (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

Director of Youth and Family Ministries: Tim Knorek

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

Church Secretary: Marilyn Schultz

Custodian: Holly Olson

Ministers of Music: Ginny Shimota, Mary Schumann, Michelle Tomsche

Acoustic Joy Directors: Roger DeBoer and Cindi Rhoe

The Church Council welcomes your feedback and suggestions.

Bill Latare, Pres. Amy Krystosek, V-Pres. Gary Braaten, Sec. Lisa Meyer, Treas.

Erik Bergs Steve Hancock Dennis Holland Steve Kron Kim Mielke

6000 County Road 120, St. Cloud, MN 56303

Phone: (320) 217-8784 **Email:** general.info@ajlcmc.org

Website: www.aboundingjoy.org

Office Hours: Tuesday-Friday from 9:00 am-1:00 pm