



The Abounding Joy Herald

Thursday, February 5, 2026



Gathering in Joy - Reaching Out with God's Love

The Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany, February 8, 2026

Education Hour is at 9:00 am with Worship at 10:00 am

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, Feb. 8 by reading Ezekiel 36:22-28, Ephesians 5:15-21, and John 16:4b-15.

LENT Ash Wednesday, February 18, is the start of the season of Lent. We will have two worship services that day - at noon and at 6:30 p.m. For the season of Lent, we are going to spend a great deal of time in the Gospel of John. To help us in our journey, we have a daily devotional and video study we encourage you to participate in. The title of this study is "Life in His Name" by Kyle Idleman. The video study will also be our Sunday morning adult study. Please sign up on the sign-up sheet on the Info Table to preorder your copy of this devotional and guide for \$5/each.



During Sunday morning worship, we will focus on moments in John's Gospel where Jesus meets the *needs* of the people, because He is our Savior we want.

On Wednesday nights at 6:30 p.m. (starting Wednesday, February 25), we will also study one of the key features found in John's Gospel with Jesus' "I Am" statements in our series, "Am I ___?" Join us for a powerful Lenten journey.



IN OUR PRAYERS: *Ken Lucy, Kathy Erickson, Marlys Hopke, Jeffrey Karbedeh, Madge Rowe, Ginny Shimota, Johnny (Holly Olson's father), Barrett (Deb Hendrickson's brother), Gene (Karon Doble's brother), Kim and Traci (Karen Greenwaldt's brother and wife), Peggy (Marc Schrantz's sister), Renee (Anna Bleess-Lahr's daughter-in-law), Ray (Diane Spanier's brother-in-law), Mitch (Tammy Holland's nephew), Pastor Charles (Deb Hendrickson's friend), and Pat (Greg Voller's friend).*

HAPPY BIRTHDAY to:

Mary Schumann, Wednesday, February 11



WE EXPRESS OUR CONDOLENCES to *Wanda Fonken* and *Family* on the death of her sister-in-law *Ilene*. Ilene died on Tuesday after recently being widowed by the death of Wanda's brother, Dennis. Funeral arrangements are pending in Fosston, MN.

CONTINUED PRAYERS for and CONDOLENCES to *Family* and *Friends* of Abounding Joy member *Arne Moe* on his recent death. A memorial service will be held in the spring. May the promise of the resurrection to new life in Jesus bring hope and comfort to all who grieve.

SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY is this Sunday, February 8th. Please plan to stay after worship to enjoy fellowship and a soup and sandwich lunch followed by our Annual Meeting. Even if your favorite team won't be playing in the Super Bowl, you can enjoy a super bowl of soup here at Abounding Joy. Everyone is welcome!

ANNUAL MEETING The Abounding Joy Annual Meeting is this Sunday, February 8, following our worship service and Souper Bowl meal. If you took a copy of the Annual Report home last Sunday to prepare for the meeting, please bring it along with you to the meeting. Your attendance is important at the Annual Meeting so that the yearly business can be conducted—a *quorum (60 voting members) is required*.

PRAAYER 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 Announcements serve to point us to our opportunities to live out our mission over the next week before we go with God's blessing. To ensure this happens so that all can hear, announcements are readied in advance. The deadline to turn in announcements to Pastor Brandon for the upcoming weekend will be Friday mornings at 10 a.m.

God's Word is Powerful and Sufficient

After all the cold weather in January, it's nice to see the sun come out and the temperatures warm up into the teens. I have a feeling I'm not by myself in welcoming the change. However, there is one matter I'm not looking forward to as the temperatures rise, and that would be the ice "rock" that sits on the corner of my driveway.

This rock was first developed through the efforts of our local snow plowers. Unfortunately, because it was so cold, I did not get out in time to move that snow mixture, and let it build up (sorry, Monique!). It would take a little while longer for me to discover what had developed there as well. That is, until one day when I was coming into our driveway, I took the turn a little sharp and drove right into it. What started as a little build-up became something much stronger. (My truck is fine, by the way.)

While I do need to be careful around this "rock," there is another rock I don't have to be as cautious around. That's the rock that is our God.

Maybe you've noticed that before every sermon I pray these words, "May the words of my mouth and the meditation of [our] hearts be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer." These words come directly from Psalm 19:14. Elsewhere, the Scriptures teach us that God is our rock. These words give us a sense of the strength, the toughness, and the wherewithal that is found in God.

Think with me for a moment on a rock. Rocks become larger over time. This happens, along with their strengthening, as they endure the elements of weather. As they are in these difficulties, the rock is formed with an incredible durability. It's those rocks that you want to build structures with for they will stand and endure.

When we call God a rock, we are stating that He is strong, durable, and enduring to the highest degree. As we see Him with His might, He becomes larger in our eyes. God uses that strength to protect, defend, help, and redeem His children. He uses His might for our good.

In fact, this is what Psalm 18:1-3 tells us. Check this out for a moment in your Bible.

This is one of the best prayers in your Bible to repeat because it shares that God, in His strength, becomes a fortress for us. For the original readers, a fortress would have been a significant visual, for it was a place of safety, security, and comfort. It provided refuge from the enemies around us as well as the natural elements.

This is what God uses His strength for. He surrounds you to comfort, defend, and encourage you. And in turn, all we need to declare is that we love Him.

However, we need this especially when we go through tough times. Those moments that seem to beat upon us and wear us down are the ones when we need to look for something strong and helpful. We look for what will lift us up in those times. Because when our situations leave us overly cautious and fretting, we need a source we can cling to. We need a rock we can hold onto. Why not come to the strongest one possible?

God is stronger than we often give Him credit for. He's so much better than we remember. Today, we can change that. One of the best sources to help us respond to God in our tough times is to repeat the words of Scripture.

We don't have to keep cautious with our Rock. We can praise Him. We can bring ourselves to Him as we are. In Him, we will find all the help and hope we could possibly need and more. Come to Him today, for He is our greatest source of strength. *Pastor Brandon*

ANNUAL MEETING VOTE: As a member congregation of the North American Lutheran Church (NALC), we have the role and responsibility to participate in ratifying any proposed amendments voted on by delegates at the National Convocation. This past summer, delegates voted on three amendments to changes in NALC's constitution:

- 1) Changing the title to "Constitution & Bylaws"
- 2) Officially referring to the North American Lutheran Seminary as "NALS"
- 3) Renaming "Indemnification" in Article 16 to "Legal and Financial Matters"

A simple majority vote is needed on each of these proposed changes in order for them to go into effect. We will be voting on these matters during our meeting and in your Annual Report will be a bit more information about each of these amendments.

SNOW TUBING *RESCHEDULED* Join us for winter family fun! Snow Tubing at Powder Ridge has been rescheduled to Saturday, February 7th, 3:00-5:00 PM for anyone age 4 and older. The cost will be \$15 per person. You can pay in advance—just drop payment off at the church office or you can pay the day of the event. Please sign up on the sign-up sheet on the Info Table to let us know you're coming.

WEDNESDAY LENTEN MEALS will be served prior to our Wednesday 6:30 pm worship services starting February 25th (no evening meal Ash Wednesday). The freewill meal will be served from 5:30-6:15 pm. There is a sign-up sheet on the Info Table for you to volunteer your services in helping to prepare, cook, bake, and/or clean-up.

RECHARGE WINTER RETREAT: Mount Carmel on Lake Carlos, Alexandria, February 13-16, 2026!
Cost: \$235 per adult, lower rates for youth, kids 0-4 free

Consider spending some intentional time this President's Day weekend in Christian community and growing in faith. This will be a fun and relaxing opportunity to get to know more individuals and families from Abounding Joy and from around Minnesota.

Reimbursement: Abounding Joy seeks to promote Bible camp opportunities for families and will reimburse \$100 per person attending for the first time and \$50 for any return attendees. We are hoping that the cost will not be a prohibitive factor for anyone considering this event.

Housing and Meals: Modern housing in heated cabins and hotel-style rooms is provided for 3 nights. Your party will have your own private space for the weekend. Nine lodge meals are provided.

Bible Study and Worship: Experience time of renewal and dive deeper into God's Word in this special Christian Community. There will be opportunities to sing, and learn – kids in age-level programming with camp counselors and adults with the guest speaker.

Snow Recreation: broomball, sledding, ice fishing, and other fun on Mount Carmel campus on Lake Carlos. Then warm up inside by the fire.

How to Register: registration can be online at mountcarmelministries.com or by calling their office at (320) 846-2744. Talk to Tim Knorek if you have any questions or want to know more!

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>

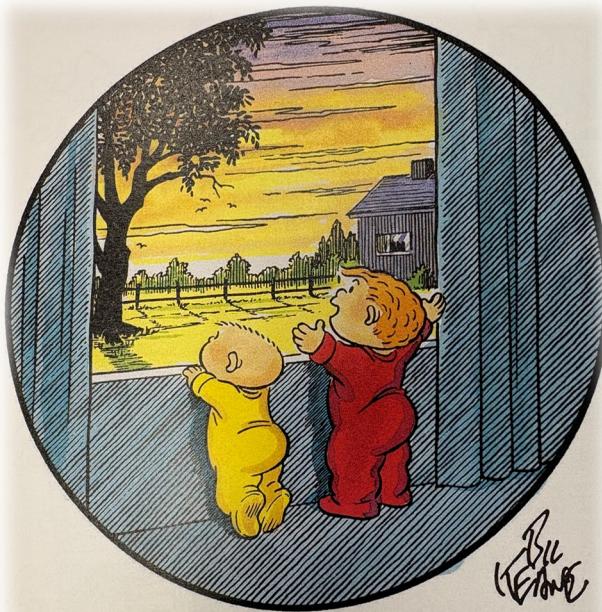
OUR e-GIVING PLATFORM If you choose to give your offering electronically, you can give at this secure link: <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-ZN68/> or use the QR code. We are grateful for your generosity and commitment.



Sunday, February 1, 2026

ATTENDANCE: 121

OFFERING: Gen: \$17,170
AJ Capital Expense Fund: \$180



"God must've stayed up all night to make such a beautiful morning!"

This Week at Abounding Joy

Saturday, February 7

3:00-5:00 pm Rescheduled Snow Tubing at Powder Ridge

Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany, February 8

9:00 am Education Hour—Adult/Confirmation/Sunday School
10:00 am Worship Service
11:00 am Prayer Partners
11:10 am Fellowship and Souper Bowl Lunch
11:45 am Congregational Annual Meeting

Monday, February 9

6:30 pm Gospel Gals Small Group Bible Study

Tuesday, February 10

10:00 am Selah Small Group Bible Study
6:30 pm Acoustic Joy Rehearsal

Wednesday, February 11

9:00 am Men's Faith Talk
10:30 am Seekers Small Group Bible Study
Noon Bible Study
6:00 pm Youth Group

Thursday, February 12

9:00 am Intercessory Prayer

The Transfiguration of Our Lord, February 15 (wear White)

9:00 am Education Hour—Adult Class
10:00 am Worship Service with Acoustic Joy
11:10 am Fellowship and Birthday Refreshments

The Abounding Joy Foundation

Brad Lundquist, President	Dennis Holland, Council Representative
Carl Batdorf, Vice President	Dale Hellickson, Member at Large
Greg Norman, Secretary	Deb Hendrickson, Member at Large
Bruce Peterson, Treasurer	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

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

Acoustic Joy Directors: Roger DeBoer and Cindi Rhoе

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