



The Abounding Joy Herald

Thursday, March 5, 2026



Gathering in Joy - Reaching Out with God's Love **The Third Sunday in Lent, March 08, 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, March 8 by reading Genesis 12:1-8; Romans 4:1-5, 13-17; and John 4:5-26. During Sunday morning worship in this season of Lent, we are focusing on moments in John's Gospel where Jesus meets the *needs* of the people, because He is our Savior we want.



PRAYER PARTNERS On Sunday following the worship service, there will be prayer partners available at the front of the sanctuary for anyone who wishes to have prayer for someone and/or for their own prayer needs.

WORSHIP SERVICES are at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesdays during Lent. We are studying one of the key features found in John's Gospel with Jesus' "I Am" statements in our series, "Am I ___?" Join us in this powerful Lenten journey.



IN OUR PRAYERS: Cheryl Biel, Karon Doble, Kathy Erickson, Sharon Henry, Jeffrey Karbedeh, Ken Lucy, Madge Rowe, Ginny Shimota, Kim (Dean Peterson's daughter), Jim (Jeanie Frolander's, Joanie Peterson's, Joyce Cass' brother), 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), Mitch (Tammy Holland's nephew), Paul (Mary Windels' cousin), Tom (Joyce Neyssen's cousin), Abby (Joyce Neyssen's great niece), Pastor Charles (Deb Hendrickson's friend), and Pat (Greg Voller's friend).

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.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY to:

- Brian Frank, Friday, March 6
- Pris Krieg, Friday, March 6
- Dean Peterson, Saturday, March 7
- Max Blais, Sunday, March 8
- Corey Klatt, Monday, March 9



LENT During this season of Lent, we are devoting time to the Gospel of John. We are using the daily devotional and video study "Life in His Name" by Kyle Idleman. This video study is also being used in our Adult Education class on Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m. You can still get a book. Extra copies were ordered (\$5/ea) and are available in the Office.



WEDNESDAY LENTEN MEALS are served from 5:30-6:15 pm. The meal is offered for a freewill donation. We extend a big Thank You to Anna Bleess-Lahr and those who have volunteered to help each week with preparation, serving, and clean-up!

EASTER OUTREACH MINISTRY Let's join together to reach out with God's love to our Abounding Joy Family and Our Community. Visit the display table in the fellowship area, choose an egg from the Easter basket, and purchase a gift card from the store named on the egg. *(Please tape the receipt to the gift card and write the \$ amount on the card itself using a sharpie.)* Cash gifts are also welcome! Return your purchased gift card to the container provided on the display table by Palm Sunday, March 29. If you are aware of a family, neighbor, co-worker or shut-in struggling who would benefit from this ministry, please contact Pastor Brandon. Names are held in confidence. The gifts received will be distributed before Easter. Thank you! If questions, call: Elaine Mullenmaster (320-493-2554).

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

So far in this season of Lent, we've been learning a lot about Jesus. We've discovered some intriguing facets the apostle John wanted us to capture and (hopefully) have been captivated by Jesus! For in this time, Lent calls us to get caught up in watching and experiencing Jesus.

Those who watch closely will eventually have to share about what they have been looking at. So, think for a moment, what's the last recommendation you've made to a friend? Maybe it was a book you read or a restaurant you ate at. Maybe it was a tactic you made when fixing a home appliance. Maybe it was a financial decision that has helped you out tremendously. Our experiences are meant to be shared and inside, we want to tell others so they experience something similar.

There is a healthy sense of pride we experience when we've learned important skills or information and our life has been positively benefited by that knowledge. However, there's also a line that can easily get crossed if we're not careful. A line that leads us to pride and jealousy.

We need to talk about this line and there's a passage in John's Gospel account that helps us do so. It's found in John 3:22-30. I invite you to take a moment now to read these words.

Early in John 1, we met John the Baptist. He shapes the early narrative of Jesus' ministry as an important figure. He got the great experience of baptizing Jesus and declaring Him "the Lamb of God." John points his disciples to follow Jesus, and he gets to see the positive fulfillment of his prophetic ministry.

John made the recommendation of Jesus and the public took John at his word. They got to experience the tremendous joy of following Jesus and taking in His ministry. We could say that John was accomplished and successful in all the tasks God called Him to.

This is true and John recognizes this. He certainly can feel a healthy sense of pride for God has used him as a vessel to lead to Jesus. John's life has been positively benefited by all this, as well as many

other people's. However, John's disciples had a different evaluation of the situation.

Isn't it interesting that here in the Gospels, we have adherents who are so loyal to one way that they fall into a trap. What has trapped them? Jealousy! Although they had not been leading the ministry and probably hadn't looked the part, they take upon themselves what they feel John is owed. They become prideful about all that John has been up to and how they have helped him. Yet, as Jesus grows in popularity, they give in to the tug. For John's season is coming to a close and his ministry is going to end.

While John's disciples do not recognize the moment, John does. Notice how John acts in this moment - not with pride, not with jealousy, but with humility. All that John has been able to accomplish is from the grace of God. That has led him to have a successful time, but the season is over.

Yet, rather than get sullen about this, John guides his disciples to see something else. He helps them see that all that they've been up to has never been about him or their ministry. It's always been about Jesus. John lifts Jesus up as what's most important.

John refuses to cross the line by showing his disciples and us how we resist the temptation to pride and jealousy. It's to praise Jesus. John realized and remembered that Jesus is more than a man. He is God in the flesh and His words hold so much more than any person's could. It's in turning to Jesus' word that we become reoriented and can repent.

John is indicating what the Gospel does in us, which is what the whole Gospel according to John shows us: Jesus makes all things new - including us. Because of Jesus, we will be changed and it's a change to magnify Christ with our lives. We now make much of His name and reputation. We live to point to Jesus.

John got that right. He didn't seek to maintain or increase his glory. John teaches us this. Let's let this be our reminder. In Lent, may we be open to God's humbling. As we continue in the Gospel of John, let's lift Jesus high. Let's be made new as we get caught up in Him. *Pastor Brandon*

READERS FOR GOOD FRIDAY WORSHIP SERVICES

For our Good Friday services this year, we will again be offering Tenebrae service, at both noon and 6:30 p.m.. During each service, we will need 6 readers for each service to join us in sharing God's word as we journey with Jesus to the cross. There is a sign-up out on the Info Table. Please consider sharing your gifts during these special services.

TABLE TALK PHONES & SOCIAL MEDIA *Sunday, March 8, 11:30 a.m.* Join us for a Table Talk with Eric Blake, a 25-year veteran in youth ministry and a



dad of teenagers, as we engage the topic of technology, phones and social media in light of the Word of God. You will have an opportunity to create a family covenant on how to use technology, share in discussion, and ask questions. Our Table-Talk events are an opportunity to come together over a meal (served at 11:30 a.m.) and converse about important topics across generations. *We invite students, parents, grandparents — everyone to join us!* We'll meet in the Hope & Peace Sunday school room. Please sign up on the sign-up sheet on the Info Table to give us a number for which to prepare.

SECRET SISTERS REVEAL—Mark your calendar and save-the-date if you are a Secret Sister! The big, fun reveal gathering will be on Saturday, March 14th, starting at 10:30 a.m. As you make plans to attend, maybe you have a favorite snack or light meal contribution you'd like to make and share. So as not to 'reveal' early, there's no sign-up sheet but 'Thank you' for sharing treats!

ANOTHER OUTREACH OPPORTUNITY is set up in the Fellowship Area thru Wednesday, March 18th, to help the Terebinth Refuge. A Thrivent grant has been used to purchase some of the towels and bed sheets on display. You are invited to help with a cash donation (in the milk jar) to help purchase paper products to donate. Terebinth Refuge is a Christ-centered resource offering hope, healing, freedom, and a safe place for sexually exploited and trafficked women. They bring education and awareness to the St. Cloud area in efforts to prevent human trafficking.

FISH FRY The best Fish Fry is one that not only tastes terrific but also benefits a great cause—St. Katharine Drexel School Fundraiser Fish Fry is on Friday, March 20th, 4:00-8:00 pm. This delicious fish fry includes all you can eat hand-breaded fish, baked beans, chips, coleslaw, and beverage. This fundraiser includes a bake sale, silent auction, meat raffle, and ice cream sale. For advance fish fry tickets for adults (\$15) contact Greg Voller or Marilyn in the Office. (Kids tickets can be purchased at the door: 10-yrs and younger \$8; and, 3 -yrs and younger eat free).

YOU'VE GOT MAIL Please check you mail folder regularly. This time you do have mail—the 2026 Time and Abilities Sheet. Fill it in with the areas in which you would like to be contacted to share your talents and return it to the box in the Office as soon as possible. We would like to know in which areas you are available and wish to let your light shine.

EMERGENCY FILE Did you know there's an Emergency File in the back of the second mail folder box? In this file is member and frequent visitor contact information letting us know who to contact in case you are the subject of an emergency. Please take a minute to check the folder to see if your current information is correct and notify Wendy Norman with changes. We don't plan emergencies so it's a good thing to be prepared! Thank you!

APPRECIATION NOTES have been received from the Rice Area Food Shelf for our donation of \$3,570 as designated recipient of our Local 4th quarter tithe; and a Thank You was received from the Global Teen Challenge when we designated their organization as a recipient of our National 4th Quarter tithe in the amount of \$1,530. These designations are made quarterly by the Missions Team and approved by the Church Council. Check the bulletin board for these acknowledgements.

RightNow MEDIA We are partnered with  RightNow 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>

Some recent releases you might want to check out are: "The Familiar Stranger" and "Essentials of Faith: Why do we go to church?"

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, March 01, 2026

ATTENDANCE: 121

OFFERING: Gen: \$16,044
AJ Capital Expense Fund: \$1,655



This Week at Abounding Joy

The Third Sunday in Lent, March 8

9:00 am Adult Education Hour
10:00 am Worship Service
11:00 am Prayer Partners
11:10 am Fellowship and Refreshments
11:30 am Table Talk (with Lunch)

Monday, March 9

6:00 pm Acoustic Joy Rehearsal
6:30 pm Gospel Gals Small Group Bible Study

Tuesday, March 10

10:00 am Selah Small Group Bible Study
6:30 pm Men's Ensemble Rehearsal

Wednesday, March 11

9:00 am Men's Faith Talk
10:30 am Seekers Small Group Bible Study
Noon Bible Study
5:30-6:15 pm Lenten Meal
6:30 pm Lenten Worship Service

Thursday, March 12

9:30 am Intercessory Prayer

Saturday, March 14

10:30 am Secret Sisters Reveal Gathering

The Fourth Sunday in Lent, March 15

9:00 am Education Hour—Adult Class/Sunday School
10:00 am Worship Service with Reception of New Members and Acoustic Joy
11:10 am Fellowship and Birthday Refreshments

The Abounding Joy Foundation

Carl Batdorf, Pres. Dale Hellickson, V-Pres. Deb Hendrickson, Sec. Bruce Peterson, Treas.
Tim Carlson Brian Frank Jane Martinson Pastor Brandon Foster

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. Rick Bellrichard, V-Pres. Gary Braaten, Sec. Lisa Meyer, Treas.
Erik Bergs Wanda Fonken Steve Kron Amy Krystosek Jane Martinson

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