



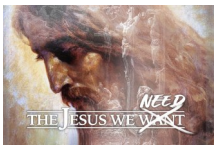
The Abounding Joy Herald

Thursday, March 12, 2026



Gathering in Joy - Reaching Out with God's Love **The Fourth Sunday in Lent, March 15, 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 15 by reading Isaiah 42:14-16, Ephesians 5:8-14, and John 9:1-7, 13-17, 34-39. 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.

THIS WEEKEND: We welcome these new members to Abounding Joy: Kim DiLaura; Jake and Maria Doto; and Grant and Robin Hagen, Beckett (2 yr.) and Belinda (4 mo.). Please join us in welcoming them as they join in our mission together!

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: *Joyce Cass, Jeanie Frolander, Cheryl Biel, Karon Doble, Kathy Erickson, Jeffrey Karbedeh, Ken Lucy, Madge Rowe, Carol and Steve Sarff, Ginny Shimota, Kim* (Dean Peterson's daughter), *Johnny* (Holly Olson's father), *Jim* (Jeanie Frolander's, Joanie Peterson's, Joyce Cass' brother), *Barrett* (Deb Hendrickson's brother), *Gene* (Karon Doble's brother), *Kim and Traci* (Karen Greenwaldt's brother & 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.

This Sunday we celebrate these MARCH birthdays:

<u>HAPPY BIRTHDAY to:</u>	<u>March</u>
Greg Voller	1
Joy Mikyska	2
Joanie Peterson	3
<i>Brian Frank</i>	6
<i>Pris Krieg</i>	6
<i>Dean Peterson</i>	7
<i>Max Blais</i>	8
<i>Corey Klatt</i>	9
Caleb Schultz	13
Elyse Foster	14
Warren Luepke	14
Ginny Shimota	18
Diane Spanier	18
Elijah Krystosek	20
Arlene Morey	21
Marcy Cody	22
Christine Durheim	23
Debbie Hahn	26
Cheryl Bratten	31



LENT As we devote this season of Lent to the study of 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. There are still extra copies 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 Bless-Lahr* and those who have volunteered to help each week with preparation, serving, and clean-up!

PASTOR BRANDON HEADS OUT: On Monday, Pastor Brandon heads for Florida to attend the Exponential Conference for Pastors and Church leaders in Orlando, FL. Following the end of the conference, he and the Foster family will enjoy some of the Florida weather for the next week on vacation. As he is gone, Pastor Julie Smith and Pastor Tom Stover will be sharing messages with us on Sunday mornings, and Tim Knorek and Bill Latare will lead Wednesday night worship. If you have any needs arise during this time, please contact the church office.

God's Word is Powerful and Sufficient

One of the tenets of the season of Lent is the encouragement to fast. This ties to the timing of the season, for Lent is forty days (plus 6 Sundays) to coincide with Jesus' forty days of fasting in the wilderness. Forty is also the number of years the Israelites wandered in the desert after their exodus from Egypt.

Whether it is a type of food, drink, pattern, or behavior, we fast not for the purpose of simply going without something and being uncomfortable. We fast because we realize that what only can fill us comes from God and we must be connected to Him. It is meant to draw us closer to Jesus.

Are you fasting from anything this Lenten season?

This year, as I practice fasting, I am also paying attention to my water intake. I am not always the best water drinker, and so as I go without, I am adding that which gives me life and what my body really needs. I find that as I drink water in this season, I'm reminded of Jesus' going without water. Yet, there is a water He gives that fills us with life.

Water is one of those words in John's Gospel that isn't always prominent, but it is powerfully used. One of the most significant times this word appears is in John 7:37-38. Take a moment to read this in your Bibles.

We learn that Jesus says these words "on the last day of the feast." Which feast is He at? This is at the Feast of Booths or the Feast of Tabernacles. This was a special time of celebration for the people of Israel. They gathered in Jerusalem for worship at the Temple, where they reenacted the stories from the forty years in the wilderness. They did all this to connect to their history and recommit themselves to trusting God. It is God who has always provided for them. With their worship, they reflected on all the ways He is still doing so.

However, after worship they didn't head home but stuck around. During the evenings, they made camps outside the city of booths or little tabernacles.

They were primarily tents. They reenacted the type of lifestyle the Israelites had during that time.

As they lived like their ancestors, they reflected on what life was like then. They spent time rehearsing the stories as a family. They remembered all that God had done and was doing.

One of the stories that came up involved water. Maybe you remember how the Israelites had left Egypt, walked through the Red Sea, and then started complaining. They were in a desert and they were thirsty! They needed water. Yet, God gave Moses an idea, one he wouldn't have come up with on his own. It was to strike the rock and water would come out. Seemed a little crazy at the time, until Moses did it. Water flowed out of the rock in abundance and quenched the peoples' thirst!

During the Feast of Booths, there was a ceremony where the priest took water and poured it out as a remembrance of the story, but also as a connection to a prophecy from Isaiah 12:3, which says, "With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation." These words are spoken by God in light of the activity of the coming Messiah.

All of this adds context to what Jesus says in these verses. He's making a very public statement regarding who He is. The people would need to respond. Some, as John tells us, do not hesitate to trust. Others question. Some deny. Yet, Jesus intrigues all as He symbolizes the element that makes this real: water. Jesus makes the true water that gives life overflow in our hearts.

John points us again to the way we find out: by coming to Jesus and drinking. This is a continuous act, one of turning from other sources and partaking in Him. By believing in Jesus, we will be filled with life and we will know His life.

So, are you also filling up this Lent? As you fast in this season, don't forget to fill up. Fill up on Jesus daily and continuously. You will find true and real life in Him. *Pastor Brandon*

FIRST COMMUNICANTS: On Maundy Thursday, April 2, we have three young men who will be joining us at the Lord's Table for their first communion. We welcome *Jack Blais*, son of Dana and Troy Blais; and *Nolan* and *Garret Worm*, grandsons of Jon and Jeanie Frolander.

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 sheet on the Info Table. Please consider sharing your gifts during these special services.

LADIES' LUNCHEON will be at noon on Friday, March 27th, at the Great River Bowl and Partners Pub (208 2nd St. S., Sartell). There's a sign-up sheet on the Info Table. All Abounding Joy ladies and lady-friends are invited and encouraged to share in great food and conversation.

2026 TIME AND ABILITIES were in your mail folders last week. Please take a few minutes to look over the sheet and mark the areas where you would like to share your time and abilities. We realize that our available time and physical abilities change as time marches on, so it's important for us to be up-to-date on areas where you will be most comfortable being called to help. Thank you!

SECRET SISTERS REVEAL—Check your calendar the Secret Sister reveal is here! This 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!

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).



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).

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.



"OH, THE WEATHER OUTSIDE IS..." Living in Minnesota, we know that we can get all kinds of weather, and sometimes that weather affects how we



"gather in joy" at Abounding Joy. That's why together Pastor Brandon and the council have worked together to create an Inclement

Weather Policy. Whenever projected storms are in our region, we are cognizant of your safety and this policy was made with you in mind. You will find this approved policy with this copy of the Herald. It outlines how we will make decisions for worship, as well as how we will inform you with any forecasted weather. We will also have physical copies available this weekend.

MN FOOD SHARE month is on this month—**MARCH**. When shopping for your own household, it is deeply appreciated if you are able to buy a few extra items to share in the grocery cart by the entry coat racks. This grocery cart is available year around but this month is a special March Campaign in Minnesota. We appreciate and thank Carl and Betty Batdorf for their faithful collection and delivery of our donated items!



THANK YOU! In fact, *many thanks* for your generosity in supporting our contribution of paper products for the Terebinth Refuge! Your total donation was **\$284!** Paper products will be purchased at Sam's club and delivered later next week along with the sheets and towels purchased with a Thrivent grant.

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?"

Sunday, March 08, 2026

ATTENDANCE: 148

OFFERING: Gen: \$10,089
AJ Capital Expense Fund: \$980

This Week at Abounding Joy

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
11:10 am Fellowship and Refreshments

Tuesday, March 17

1:15 pm Joyful Sisters Small Group Bible Study
6:30 pm Men's Ensemble Rehearsal

Wednesday, March 18

9:00 am Men's Faith Talk
Noon Bible Study
1:15 pm Joyful Stitchers
4:00 pm Church Council Meeting
5:30-6:15 pm Lenten Meal
6:30 pm Lenten Worship Service

Thursday, March 19

9:30 am Intercessory Prayer

The Fifth Sunday in Lent, March 22

9:00 am Education Hour
10:00 am Worship Service with Guest Julie Smith
11:10 am Fellowship and 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