

# Abiding Word Lutheran Church

464 Oak Tree Crossing Dr., Brenham, Texas 77833

Weekly Newsletter Friday, December 15, 2023

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Sunday School: 9:00 a.m.; Worship Service: 10:00 a.m.



Dear congregants of Abiding Word Lutheran Church. Please remember that the nave and sanctuary is a place for those that want to reflect and pray before worship begins. I uphold those that wish to be in the worship area for this time of reflection and solitude before worship. Time for reflection and prayer is an opportunity to come before God and a great practice for all individuals. Please respect those individuals, and please keep conversation in the fellowship area. ~Rev. Cody Mills

## God's Solid Word

*Rev. Cody Mills*

I encountered an individual years ago who asked a question, "How do we know that our preaching is doing any good? I don't see anything happening in my congregation to show me people get it!" I was silent for a bit. My brain rattled for an answer to this question. Perhaps the individual was venting, asking a rhetorical question, or something else. But one thing was for sure. This question was not of Christ, a concerned Christian, or a stressed-out pastor. This pastor was not Lutheran by any means. He was rooted in the prosperity Gospel. You may not have heard of such a thing. The Prosperity Gospel is a promise of great things if they believe hard enough. That could be restored health, car, house, healed paralytic, etc.

The Church he was taking care of was never referred to as God's Church. He referred to it as his (the pastor's church) that he built. It was once thriving, but slowly declining. He had aspirations of building several campuses, motivating people to be hyped about his sermons. What was absent? The promise of God had been substituted for hype. Baptism was a symbol, communion was a symbol, and God's promise could only be given to receptive individuals.

I realized this individual's question had nothing to do with his office but that from Satan. That question passes the lips of individuals who are at their weakest and they need a restoring promise. The Holy Spirit was helping me from rebuking him right away. I give thanks for this silence and the Holy Spirit interfering. Finally, I had to respond.

"Look. Why are you the sole individual in your church to judge whether or not God's promise is working in the church? You are a shepherd. You are not the builder of God's kingdom. God is the builder of the kingdom. His words when given in promise do exactly what He promises. It does not return empty."

When we decide worship, sacraments, etc. are only meaningful and productive on our terms, we lose the promise God gives us. We as individuals fail, God's promise and forgiveness are relevant and working regardless. We receive this promise in sacraments, preaching, and scripture. When we think it is not meaningful, the more we need it. That is what Advent is about. The coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who presents Himself in communion and baptism. And hopefully a preacher's mouth. Amen.

**Joshua 21:45** - <sup>45</sup> Not one word of all the good promises that the Lord had made to the house of Israel had failed; all came to pass.

**Isaiah 55:11** - <sup>11</sup> so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

**Romans 9:6** - <sup>6</sup> But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel,

## Christmas Eve Service

Christmas Eve service is on a Sunday in the year of our Lord and Savior 2023. Because of this situation that comes about every four years, we will have normal Sunday service at 10:00 AM with no adult or child Sunday school. We will then have service that evening starting at 6:00 PM. We are excited to present a message to you with Christ at the center, and a Christmas tree a pleasant reminder of who He is. You will not be disappointed.



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### Longest Night Candle Vigil

Wednesday, December 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm at the church. This is open to the congregation and the community.

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**Thank you to those who participated in Bethlehem in Independence this year!**

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A large pair of sunglasses and a black jacket were left at the Church. Claim them from the Church Office if they are yours.

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### NALC Ladies' Luncheon

Today, December 15<sup>th</sup>,  
11:00 am at the Cannery  
You can get your ticket from Donna Kelling at the door.

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Plan to celebrate New Years Eve early this year instead of waiting until midnight to do so! We will have a Brunch immediately following the service on December 31st. We will have a party hat for you so please come!!!

The Fellowship Committee will be supplying the food, things like quiche, salad, fruit salad, black eye peas, ham and biscuits. A free will offering will be out on the table to supplement their budget. We look forward to this fun time of fellowship!

# JUST A LITTLE *Reminder*

\*This Sunday, Dec. 17<sup>th</sup> the Emergency Response Team will meet after the service.

\* There will be NO Ladies' day Bible Study on Tuesday, Dec. 19<sup>th</sup>

\*Year End Giving must be postmarked or received in the Church Office by Sunday, December 31<sup>st</sup>

\*Committee Chairs - your year-end reports for the Congregational Meeting are due by January 7<sup>th</sup>. Please submit them to the Church admin.

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## Church Directory App Update!

We've been working this week on preparing our instructions for all of you to be able to download and use the app, but Christmas is approaching fast and we're limited on the amount of time we can spend on this work! We look forward to completing this project and sharing that info with you in January!

Please continue to submit your consent forms if you wish to participate.

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## Save the Date for a NALC Event

February 10, 2024: Pastor Brad Hales from the NALC will be at Peace Lutheran in Rosenberg for a special event! Pastor Brad will be speaking about the church with aging members and different ideas to grow this ministry. This event is for everyone not just the pastor!! More info will be coming.



Dawson, for who we have been praying for a long time, is doing much better. Thank you for your prayers.

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## Servant Schedule is Out

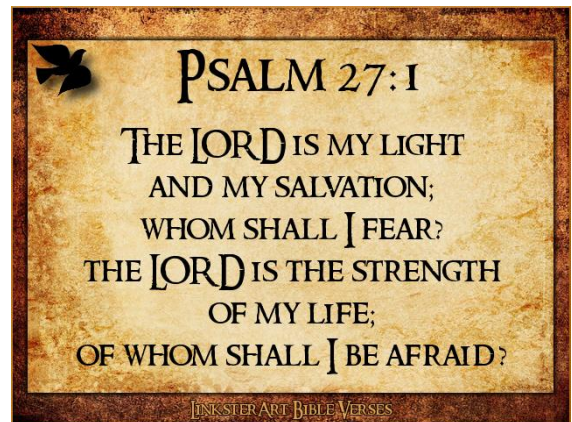
The Worship Servant Schedule for January – June has been emailed. Please let the office know if you expected to be on the schedule but did not receive an email. There are paper copies of the schedule available on the Welcome Table.

We are so appreciative of your willingness to use your gifts to serve the Church in this way.

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# Upcoming Events

- ❖ Fri. Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> – NALC Ladies' Luncheon, 11:00 am
- ❖ Wed. Dec. 20<sup>th</sup> – Longest Night Service, 6:00 pm @Church
- ❖ Sun. Dec. 24<sup>th</sup> – 10:00 am Worship Service (no adult or children Sunday School) @Church
- ❖ Sun. Dec. 24<sup>th</sup> – 6:00 pm Candlelight Service @Church
- ❖ Sun. Dec. 31<sup>st</sup> – New Year's Eve Brunch after service @Church, Bill Morris filling in for Rev. Mills
- ❖ Sun. Jan. 7<sup>th</sup> – Pastor Greg Knippa filling in for Rev. Mills



## Lectionary Readings for This Sunday:

### Third Sunday of Advent

First Reading: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

Responsive Reading: Psalm 126

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Gospel Reading: John 1:6-8, 19-28

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*Thank You*

To all our faithful servants every Sunday. The church couldn't function without you.

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## Our Servants This Sunday, December 17

### Third Sunday of Advent

Pastor: Rev. Cody Mills

Musician: Debbie Heidemann

Lay Minister: Lottie Tegeler

Reader: Donna Kelling

Greeters: Preston & Melody Perry

Communion: Rev. Cody Mills & Lottie Tegeler

Audio/Video: Benita Schramme & Wade Seidel

Ushers: Gary Crocker

Little Lambs: Rev. Cody Mills

Sunday School: Cathy Johnson

Altar Guild: Karen Johnson and Patti Swenson

## Our Servants the Following Sunday

### Morning, Dec. 24 Fourth Sunday of Advent

Pastor: Rev. Cody Mills

Musician: Debbie Heidemann

Lay Minister: Cathy Johnson

Reader: Marilyn Watts

Greeters: Ralph & Sandra Becker

Communion: Rev. Cody Mills & Sheila Demery

Audio/Video: Bill & Lois Rankin

Ushers: Berrie Etzel & TBD

Little Lambs: Rev. Cody Mills

Altar Guild: Karen Johnson and Patti Swenson

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## Our Servants the Following Sunday

### Evening, Dec. 24 Nativity of Our Lord

Pastor: Rev. Cody Mills

Musician: Debbie Heidemann

Narrator: Mia Mills

Speakers: Jan Koska, Roger & Lilajan Hibbs

Greeters: Ronnie & Pat Lueckemeyer

Communion: Rev. Cody Mills & Roger Hibbs

Audio/Video: Bill & Lois Rankin

Ushers: Sheila Demery & TBD

Altar Guild: Karen Johnson and Patti Swenson

## Prayer Time for Servants Before Worship

Note for all those involved in the worship service:

Rev. Mills would like to meet for prayer in the church office with all those involved in the worship service, 5 minutes before the service starts. Please join if your duties permit.

## Prayer Concerns Within Our Church Family\*

Herman Aschenbeck

Roy Kelm

Barbara Lighter

Wade Mills

Dennis & Doris Penkert

John Porter

Ray & Ethel Sanders

Stanley Schneider

Blake Shedd

Patsy Wegner

## Prayer Concerns Beyond Our Church Family\*

Lonnie Addicks

Lindsey Eckert

The Feathers' Family

John Jensen

Matthew, Aislinn & Thomas Kelling

Otto Kemper

Lucreacia

Susan Neidlinger

Kim Sauer

Rita Werner

Martin Luther Lutheran Church of Carmine, TX

For rain and those affected by the drought

National and government leaders

All those in the military and first responders

Those affected by the war in Ukraine & Israel

Our Community, Nation, and World

\*AWLC respects the right to privacy. Please verify that we have permission to add a family member or friend to our prayer list.

\*Names of loved ones outside our church are posted during the month of request and the following month unless we are asked to remove or extend them.

\*You may request that names be added to or removed from our list by emailing them to: [admin@abidingword.org](mailto:admin@abidingword.org) or by calling the church office.

## Updated Pastor's Schedule

Monday: Off

Tuesday: Church Office – 12 pm - 8 pm

Wednesday: Church Office / Appointments / Continuing Education 9 am-5 pm

Thursday: Church Office/Appointments 2-6 pm

Friday: Home visitations through the day

Saturday: Off

Sunday: Worship – 8:30 am – 11:30 am

Emergency Calls: 218-405-0710

Extra time is spent with committees, classes, and other events. Schedule subject to change.

## December 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>10</b> Coffee & Connection 9:00 am Adult & Children's Bible Study 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am <b>Toys for Tots due</b> Ralph Becker	<b>11</b> Wade & Hollie Mills	<b>12</b> Homeschool Co-op 11:00 am	<b>13</b> Grief Session 5:30 pm Ladies Evening Bible Study 6:30 pm Mell Morrow	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> NALC Ladies' Lunch at the Cannery 11:00 am Paisley Hooks	<b>16</b>
<b>17</b> Coffee & Connection 9:00 am Adult & Children's Bible Study 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Emergency Response Team Meeting	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> Church Council Meeting 5:45 pm	<b>20</b> Longest Night Service 5:30 pm Danny & Cathy Johnson Carol Hutchens	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b> Coffee & Connection 9:00 am No Adult or Children's Bible Study Worship 10:00 am Christmas Eve Service 6:00 pm	<b>25</b> Office Closed 	<b>26</b> Office Closed Rev. Mills out through Jan 9	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> Jon Hill	<b>30</b>
<b>31</b> Coffee & Connection 9:00 am No Adult or Children's Bible Study Worship 10:00 am New Year's Eve Brunch following the Service	<b>January 1</b> Office Closed 	<b>2</b> Journey Together Ladies Bible Study 10:00 am Worship Committee 5:30 pm	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> Larry Stark	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> Men's Breakfast @ Smitty's 8:30 am  Red = Adult's Birthday Blue = Child's Birthday Green = Wedding Anniversary

### Reminders

- **Check out Rev. Mills' Facebook clips!** You can also find sermons, adult Bible studies, upcoming events and more! <https://www.facebook.com/AbidingWordBrenham/>
- Online Giving is available through the Church Website. <https://www.abidingword.org/tithe>
- Watch Sunday services online on our website at [abidingword.org](https://www.abidingword.org). Link on the Home page or click on "Worship" > then "Livestream" - <https://www.abidingword.org/live-stream>

**Happy Birthday**

**Paisley Hooks, December 15**  
**Carol Hutchens, December 20**

*Happy Anniversary*

*Danny & Cathy Johnson, December 20*

If you have any announcements, articles, pictures, prayer requests or updates, or corrections for the newsletter, please send them to the admin. Thanks for your help! But please send it to the office no later than Wednesday end of day before. Thank you.