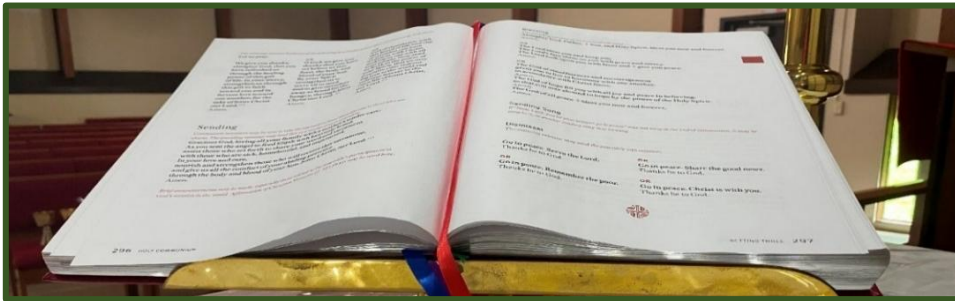


NEWS FROM ABIDING SAVIOR

March 2026



RECENT SERMONS

Missed a recent sermon? Click on the date to get it.



[Sermon – March 1, 2026](#)

[Sermon – March 8, 2026](#)

[CLICK HERE TO GIVE YOUR OFFERING](#)

CHURCH - LET'S CONTINUE PRAYING TOGETHER



**Church of the Abiding Savior -- and Friends:
The Congregation Council is calling us to
A TIME OF PRAYER!**

The prayer of a follower of God is powerful and
effective (*James 5:16b*)

**2 O'CLOCK ON TUESDAYS
2 MINUTES OF LISTENING ***

***TO GOD'S DESIRES FOR US
PERSONALLY AND AS A CONGREGATION**

SET AN ALARM

2 O'CLOCK ON TUESDAYS / 2 MINUTES LISTENING TO GOD.

FROM PASTOR CARROLL'S DESK

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

HOLY CONVERSATION # 3 **March 15, 2026 – after Worship** **(In-person and via Zoom)**

Gather around the Table of Fellowship to discuss suggested characteristics and skill sets listed below – with the understanding that not all Pastors possess ALL of these attributes.

ESSENTIAL PASTORAL CHARACTERISTICS AND SKILL - SETS

- Be a good communicator
- Build a sense of Community within the congregation
- Build a sense of Community within the neighborhood
- Provide Care and Nurture of congregational members
- Possess strategic planning skills
- Have appreciation of and competency in Cultural/Racial diversity
- Share leadership roles with congregational members
- Be active in the visitation of members and non-members
- Be effective in working with children
- Be an effective teacher of adults
- Be effective in working with youth
- Deal effectively with conflict
- Bring joy and good humor to relationships
- Be able to use technology and media
- Have talents in the areas of music and the arts

OTHERS NOT IDENTIFIED:

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JOIN US FOR CONVERSATION – ON MARCH 15TH
WE NEED TO HEAR WHAT YOU HAVE TO SAY!

The Rev. Dr. Julius – Interim Pastor

PASTOR'S OFFICE HOURS

Pastor Carroll has **Office Hours on Tuesdays between 10am - 1pm.**

Please contact him via phone/text at: 919 - 760 - 5482
or simply drop - by.



CONTRACT EXTENDED

The Congregation Council met on March 11, 2026, and voted to extend the contract of our interim pastor, Pastor Julius Carroll, for an additional six months.

This decision followed a review and evaluation of the terms of his current agreement. The Council determined that Pastor Carroll has faithfully and successfully fulfilled the expectations outlined in the contract and we are grateful for his continued leadership during this interim period.

WELCA BI-MONTHLY MEETING

Abiding Savior's WELCA's bi-monthly meeting will be held on Saturday, March 21, 2026. The meeting will include Breakfast and Bible Study. The business meeting will include planning and completing a service project.

The men of Abiding Savior are invited to breakfast if their meeting is on March 21st.



MID WEEK LENTEN SERVICES



Each Wednesday during **Lent**, there is mid-week service beginning with a simple dinner that includes soup and bread. The focus of worship each week is on one of the **"The Marys Near The Cross"**. Please plan to come out or join via Zoom,

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

Abiding Savior will be hiring an administrative assistant/bookkeeper. This position will provide support to the finance ministry for processing financial transactions and work closely with the Pastor and Congregation Council to fulfill some of the administrative needs of the congregation. This will be a part-time position (approximately 10 hours/week). If you know of or would like to recommend someone for the position, please contact any member of the council. We are seeking an individual with excellent communication and technical skills.

HOLY WEEK WORSHIP SERVICES

PALM SUNDAY, March 29th – Worship will begin with a Procession of Palms
MAUNDY THURSDAY, April 2nd - Worship (With stripping the altar) at 6:00 PM
GOOD FRIDAY, April 3rd - Worship (Seven Last Words) at 6:00 PM

WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY



**BIBLE STUDY CLASSES
ARE IN RECESS UNTIL APRIL 15TH;**
(as we are in the Season of Lent).

CHOIR

If you enjoy singing, please consider joining the choir. Voices are needed.
The upcoming rehearsals will be held on Saturday, March 14th and March 28th at 12:30 PM.

2026 SYNOD GATHERING



YOU Are Invited! This is an opportunity to meet and fellowship with people from across the synod—AND it's not just for pastors! **Church members and visitors, deacons, pastors, and church professionals** will gather to learn, play, worship, and grow together **MAY 28-MAY 30!**

MARCH MEAL AT THE SHELTER

On March 29, 2026, which is a 5th Sunday, **Abiding Savior will provide dinner for our siblings at Urban Ministries Of Durham.** Linda Warren has secured a Thrivent grant to help with the cost of the meal which is a spaghetti dinner with bread, dessert and drink. Linda and the Outreach Ministry members are continuing to plan the meal and will provide us with additional information as decisions are made. Please put this event on your calendars as this is on Palm Sunday.

THRIVENT OPPORTUNITIES

Thrivent Choice Dollars:

Members of Thrivent Financial can recommend where some of Thrivent Financial's charitable outreach funds go by directing Choice Dollars. If you are a member, please consider directing your Choice Dollars to Abiding Savior. These Dollars accumulate in your account and are not automatically allocated. Your Choice Dollars can be designated online. If you need help or have questions, please contact Veronica Johnson.

THE LARGER PICTURE

For Christmas this year, I was gifted with a jigsaw puzzle. That generous gift has drawn me into a new sort of hobby, one in which I have discovered the beauty of mindfulness that comes with doing things repetitively.

Soon after Christmas, I was putting together a puzzle. It was a serene winter scene: a gingerbread house surrounded by snow. After I had completed the puzzle, though, my son looked at the picture and asked, “What is that guy doing on the roof?”

I had no idea what he was talking about.

“What guy?” I asked. I looked at what he was seeing, and sure enough, on the roof of the gingerbread house was a tiny gingerbread man who looked like he was sneaking down the chimney. I studied the scene. There were tiny little gingerbread people all over the scene engaged in all sorts of mischief: playing baseball, cooking, and throwing snowballs. This wasn’t simply a picture of a gingerbread house; this was a picture of gingerbread shenanigans! Because I had been focused on each individual piece, I had missed what was going on in the larger picture and didn’t really even bother to pay attention to it.

On Sunday, February 22, the First Sunday of Lent, many of us read the story of Jesus being tempted in the wilderness. Each time the devil tempts him and Jesus resists, it’s as if Jesus puts one more piece of the puzzle together. The problem is resisting hunger? Check. Resisting prestige? Check. Power? Check. There in the wilderness, the puzzle is coming together. But Jesus also understands the larger picture. He knows that each of these pieces creates the picture of a God who is determined to love God’s people and to save them from themselves. Jesus can see how and why it all fits together.

Sometimes, I think we fail to see the larger picture, especially at times when the world seems so divided, when our budgets feel stretched too thin, and when our time and energy feel zapped. It becomes easy to ask: “Why are we doing this?” But Jesus reminds us of the bigger picture. We do this because God calls us—as the Church—to do it and because the Gospel of Jesus redeems and transforms the world.

When we gather for NC Synod Council meetings, which we will do this month, we begin those meetings by reminding ourselves of the big picture when we recite our purpose statement: “God calls the NC Synod of the ELCA to...cultivate and celebrate vital congregations; identify, equip, and nurture whole and healthy leaders; embrace and engage in collaboration; and proclaim the promise of the resurrection with a prophetic voice. . . all for the sake of the world.”

That purpose statement is our *big picture*. Every smaller piece we do contributes to the whole, and sometimes we need to step back a bit so we can see—and be reminded of—our larger purpose.

I pray that this season of Lent becomes a time when you can do that—a time when you are reminded that every piece of work we do is a part of God’s work for the sake of the world.

Blessings on your Lenten season as you grasp our larger purpose and hear the story, once again, of God’s redeeming love.

Together in Christ,

Emily K. Hartner

NC Synod Bishop



Bishop Curry Issues

Statement on Iran War

March 4, 2026

Dear siblings in Christ,

They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more (Isaiah 2:4).

In our Lenten journey, we are reminded of our dependence on God, and we are sustained by hope in the future peace God has promised. As war involving the United States, Israel and Iran intensifies and spreads, we lament how far off that promise seems. We do not know how many people have been killed, but we know the number will continue to grow. Early reports indicate that more than 100 Iranian schoolgirls and several U.S. service members are among them.

The church of Jesus Christ is called to proclaim the peace of God's eternal reign and to work for an earthly peace here and now. The ELCA social message "[Living in a Time of Terrorism](#)" states that this earthly peace is a "precious yet fragile good." Its existence depends on leaders who prioritize diplomacy over military engagement and deterrence over war, and on citizens who hold government accountable whenever military action is considered.

With many of you, I am distressed that a robust, public discernment through congressional authorization did not occur prior to the United States' engagement in this war. As Lutherans, we affirm that government and the order that just laws provide are gifts of God for our safety and well-being. This war does not represent the promotion of this just order but rather its failure.

The costs in lives and safety of this failure will be borne by those least able to avoid it — children, families and those without the means to flee. Its deadly toll has been, and will continue to be, paid with the lives of our neighbors, including our siblings in Christ in the Middle East.

This moment underscores the urgent need for robust, well-resourced diplomatic and humanitarian efforts. Our companions in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land have asked our church to pray fervently for peace and safety and to advocate for the dignity and security of all people. ELCA Witness in Society will continue to provide opportunities for this advocacy.

As members of the body of Christ, join me in prayerful, hopeful solidarity with our siblings and neighbors who suffer today.

Together,

We mourn the rush to war and the combatants and noncombatants who have lost their lives.

We yearn for creation's fulfillment in "a new heaven and a new earth" where death and pain "will be no more" (Revelation 21:1, 4).

We strive for justice and peace in all the earth, strengthened by faith in the crucified and risen Lord to persist.

We trust that, through God who sustains us, our weariness and fear will not overcome us.

In Christ,

The Rev. Yehiel Curry
Presiding Bishop