



Summer 2026 News from the Abbey...



Deacon Paul Treinen, Board President *"A Season to Rediscover Peace"*

Are you like me? Do you tell yourself, "Things will be a lot slower this summer?" Well...usually, it never seems to turn out that way.

Yet I do believe every season has an *'invitation to rediscover peace.'* As I write this, I am just coming off of a Silent Retreat weekend at The Abbey of the Hills that was led by Father Joe Vogel. Fr. Joe focused on God's gifts of 'silence' and 'gratitude.'

By taking time for intentionally being silent (both in our physical surroundings and in our soul) we hear God speaking...to us. We all yearn to hear God, but rarely choose this path of silence.

To grow our gratitude, Fr Joe suggested listing seven things we are grateful for before our feet leave the bed in the morning and again seven more times as we go to bed. This simple act helps to 'rewire our brains' toward the good that God is daily gifting to us.

I believe that in the silence, we do hear God speaking to us, and our hearts grow with gratitude, and we find much faith, much joy, and we will rediscover a season of peace.

I hope that in this coming season, you take the opportunity to come and visit the Abbey and experience more of the peace God wants to gift to you.

Day of Recollection

Held the 2nd Tuesday of each month
10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Please call or register online

June 9th - "Learning to Live in the Divine Will" Deacon Mike McKeown

July 14th - "So Where Did We Come From: A Trip Through Genesis" Fr. Rod Farke

August 11th - "Who is the Man of the Shroud of Turin?" Dr. Michael Moran

Sept. 8th - "The Gift of Happiness: Exploring Faith & Science Together"
Fariba Roughhead

Retreats

August 25th - 10:00 - 3:00

From Age to Age - A Day of Spiritual Reflection for Seniors
Fr. Greg Tschakert, Presenter

The senior years are a time to be grateful for the past and to live in the present with wisdom.
As a 90-year-old woman told to her pastor
"Sometimes you have to live twice before you really live once"

September 25-27

"Covenant Love - Free, Faithful, fruitful & Forever"
Lead by Darin & Missy Baumberger

Special Events

July 15th - Abbey Summer Picnic

August 5th at 5:30pm - Our Lady of the Snows Solemnity Mass followed by Dinner
President: Retired Bishop, Donald Kettler

September 29th at 5 pm -7 pm- Native American Dinner

October 28th - Annual Fall Banquet
Keynote speaker: Chad Greenway



Abbey Events

Renee Marzahn & Beth Motschenbacher



The Abbey has been blessed with a wonderful season of hospitality and activity. Weekends throughout the year have been filled with retreats, families and business meetings, bringing individuals and groups together for prayer, fellowship, learning, and renewal. It is always a blessing to see the Abbey alive with visitors seeking peace, reflection, and community.

The Abbey also played host to several special dining events this season. *Valentine's & Vespers* offered couples and friends a memorable evening of prayer, music, and fine dining. With the help of the Milbank Knights of Columbus, we welcomed more than 200 guests for the Fish Fry and fellowship. Despite challenging weather, our March St. Patrick's Day Dinner was filled to capacity as guests enjoyed delicious food and lively Irish music provided by talented local musicians.

In May, our very own Abbey employees shared both their cooking talents and cultural traditions with guests through an authentic Mexican menu in celebration of Cinco de Mayo. The evening was filled with wonderful food, laughter, and community spirit.

June will start off by welcoming of over fifty young ladies attending the girls' vocation camp and we look forward to welcoming the boys to the John Paul II vocation camp in July. We are also excited to see many of you at the annual summer picnic on July 15th. See the flyer for all the details.

While the Abbey is especially busy during the summer months, we encourage you to call for availability to schedule your individual or group retreat, meetings, or special event.

We are excited to host an authentic Native American dinner on September 29 as part of our cultural dinner series. Please call to reserve your spot.

If you are in the area, we invite you to stop by, check in at the front desk, and enjoy a visit or tour. Explore the grounds, walk the trails, pray the Stations of the Cross, or spend quiet time by the lakes and tennis courts.
This is your Abbey—come and enjoy it.

Save the Date!

The Abbey is excited to announce that Chad Greenway will be the keynote speaker for the Annual Fall Fundraiser on October 28. Chad's inspiring message of faith, perseverance, family, and service promises to make this year's fundraiser a memorable and meaningful evening for all who attend.

Last year's event welcomed an incredible crowd of supporters. In response to guest feedback, this year's banquet will feature limited round-table seating designed to create a more comfortable and enjoyable experience. We encourage guests to reserve their seats early. We hope you will join us for this memorable evening!



For more information about our retreats and events visit the website at www.abbeyofthehills.org, call 605-398-9200 or email events@abbeyofthehills.org

Follow The Abbey of the Hills:





Margaret Artz, Chief Development Officer

"Stewarding Hospitality and Mission"



At The Abbey of the Hills, this truly is *A Season to Rediscover Peace*. As the grounds turn green and guests once again fill the halls, we are reminded that The Abbey continues to be a place where people come to rest, reconnect, and renew their spirits.

The Development Office has been blessed with tremendous momentum this season. One exciting new initiative is the formation of The Abbey Ambassadors, a dedicated group of supporters helping share the mission and hospitality of The Abbey throughout the region. We are deeply grateful for their generosity of time, talent, and enthusiasm. Their photo and names are included below. Please feel free to reach out to any of them with questions, ideas, or opportunities to help support and share the mission of The Abbey.

Our Capital Campaign also continues to move forward successfully, and we are thrilled to share that *the Abbey recently received a generous \$30,000 matching gift challenge. Every contribution made during this opportunity will double and help preserve and strengthen these peaceful grounds for future generations.* We invite you to prayerfully consider a contribution toward these important needs. Every gift, large or small, makes a lasting difference, not only for the building, but for all who come here seeking rest, renewal, and a deeper connection with God.

As an added incentive, the Abbey is offering a raffle featuring several exciting prizes, including \$5000.00! Please see the enclosed flyer for all the details. If all 500 tickets are sold by July 15, the drawing will take place at the Annual Picnic. Otherwise, the drawing will be held in October. Proceeds from the raffle will help the Abbey begin several much-needed repairs to the building and grounds. Thank you for your generosity!

Most importantly, the Abbey continues its mission welcoming retreatants, volunteers, and visitors seeking peace and quiet moments with God. Whether attending a retreat, walking the grounds, praying in the chapel, or simply sharing conversation with others, people continue to rediscover peace here every day, thanks to your help and support.

Thank you for helping make the Abbey a place where peace is rediscovered, faith is renewed, and lives are touched each and every day.



Back row: Jeff Taffe, Graceville, MN; Susan Leddy, Milbank (President); Kathy Roggenbuck, Watertown; Judy Bledsoe, Sioux Falls; Cris Sichmeller, Webster; Wade VanDover, Big Stone City; Fr. Greg Tschakert, Aberdeen; Roger Feickert, Aberdeen. **Front row:** Deanne Weninger, Brookings; Sara Stegner, Ortonville, MN; Margaret Artz, Development Officer, Aberdeen; Mark Leddy, Milbank; Lance Johnson, Milbank. **Not pictured:** John & Barbara Lockwood; Fr. Mike Kelly, Sioux Falls; Dcn. Paul Treinen, Ortonville, MN.

Vehicle Loss Creates New Need for the Abbey



Recently the Abbey’s vehicle was sideswiped by a semi-truck. Thankfully, no one was injured, but sadly, the vehicle was totaled. Reliable transportation is an important part of carrying out our mission, and the Abbey is now in search of a dependable, highway-safe vehicle with lower mileage. If you know of a vehicle that may be available to donate or purchase at a reasonable cost, the Abbey would be grateful to hear from you. Please keep this need in your prayers as we continue the mission of The Abbey of the Hills on the road.



Planting season is just beginning, and we give thanks to God for the promise of another growing year! As you look ahead to harvest, we invite you to consider supporting The Abbey of the Hills with a gift of grain. The process is simple: set up an Abbey account at your local grain elevator or ethanol plant, then when harvest arrives this fall, direct a portion of your grain to be transferred to The Abbey. The elevator will send a donation check directly to the Abbey, making it easy and convenient. Your gift supports the mission and ministry of The Abbey and may also offer tax advantages, as grain donations can often be transferred without being recognized as income. Thank you for your continued support of The Abbey, a place of peace, prayer, and renewal.

Sowing Generosity, Sustaining the Mission

Stories from the Abbey Grounds...

It’s a peaceful walk tonight as darkness descends on the Abbey grounds. A train rumbles by in the distance. Lightning lights up the western horizon. I recall Father Larry, who took care of the campground years ago. One night, a group of boys was staying there. There were thunderstorms in the forecast, which had the boys a little on edge. “What if there’s a tornado?” they asked. “We’ll go up to the abbey.” “What does a tornado sound like?” “A train.”

Well, if you’ve ever been to the abbey, there are many trains that pass very close to the old campground. Not long after going to sleep, Father Larry was awakened by boys knocking on his door under the stars and clear skies, with a train rumbling by in the distance. “Father, IT’S A TORNADO!” Peace and love. Good night, moon. Good night, abbey. Good night, boys. Good night, Father Larry. - Dennis J.



Guest Testimonials

“Our company held a team retreat at Abbey of the Hills, and what a great decision that was. The peaceful setting helped everyone slow down, reconnect, and focus without distractions. Between the clean, comfortable meeting spaces, great meals, and time spent outdoors, our team left feeling refreshed and more connected. We’re already planning to come back next year.”

“Every Member of the staff was very welcoming. I felt like I was among friends from the time I checked in. I enjoyed the building & the remarkable history, the grounds and the accommodations! Special thanks to Margaret for the marvelous tour and the ‘Special fat Friday Meeting’ that I was invited to”

Abbey Team

Interim Executive Director: Deacon Paul Treinen
Chief Development Officer: Margaret Artz
Office Manager: Shelley Knippling
Events Coordinator: Renee Marzahn and Beth Motschenbacher
HR/Bookkeeper: Kim Remily
Maintenance: Bryan Anderson
Kitchen: Amanda Aadland and Matthew Allen
Housekeeping: Yara Figueroa, Sean Melendez-Ortiz and Katherine Beaner
Caretaker: Dennis Justison & Yara Figueroa

Gifts of Peace

Honorariums: Abbey Staff, Fr. Michael Griffin, Elstun Lauesen, Emmet Rogers, Wade Vandover, Br. Sebastian Goldade, OSB

Memorials: Pete Campions, Lois Dann, Connie Grimes, Mark Iverson, Br. Francis Kopel, OSB, Don Kvasnicka, Eugene Mattern, Ulla Mellander, Tony Murr & Family, Xavier & Katie Riedi, Hanna Sauer, Thomas Schaeffbauer, Veronica Schaffer, Ronald Scheider, Jo Ellen Treinen, Br. Bennett Tvedten, OSB, Corrine Zach.

The Abbey of the Hills is a nonprofit organization sustained by the generosity of those who support its mission and help foster the rediscovery of peace.

A Gift That Lasts

Legacy gifts to the Abbey of the Hills help sustain prayer, hospitality, and the care of this sacred place for generations to come. Gifts made through wills, trusts, endowments, or land ensure the Abbey remains a place of peace and renewal. Even a simple designation can make a lasting difference. To learn more about planned giving, we would be honored to speak with you in confidence.