

April 2026

Dear Friends,

There is a moment, just after Easter Sunday has passed, when the celebration quiets. The lilies are still fragrant, the alleluias still echo — but Monday will soon come and with it the ordinariness of life. It is precisely in this space, between the empty tomb and the rest of life, that a story unfolds that sets the path for the disciples going forward.

On the day of the resurrection, two disciples are walking from Jerusalem to a village called Emmaus — a journey of about seven miles. They are deep in conversation, troubled and confused. Everything they had hoped for seems to have ended at the cross. Then, as Luke tells it:

“While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him.” (Luke 24:15–16, NRSV)

A stranger joins them and asks what they are discussing. They stop, faces full of grief, and pour out their story — the prophet from Nazareth, the trial, the crucifixion, the rumors of an empty tomb. The stranger begins to walk them through the scriptures, and something stirs in their hearts, though they still do not know who he is.

As they near Emmaus, they urge the stranger to stay with them: “Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.” He comes in and reclines at the table. Then, in a simple act of breaking bread, their eyes are opened — and they recognize him. And once they recognize him, Jesus disappears from their sight.

They turn to one another and ask the question that has echoed through centuries of faith: “Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road?” Without delay, they rise and return to Jerusalem to tell the others. (another 7 miles!)

Think of the road to Emmaus as a map of the Christian life itself. We do not encounter the risen Christ and then arrive — we encounter the risen Christ, and then we are sent walking. The two disciples did not stay at the table where their eyes were opened. They got up, turned around, and went back into the world.

When we celebrate the resurrection each spring, we are not simply commemorating an event from two thousand years ago. It is not a stagnant, fixed date but instead should be seen as an experiential moment when we can encounter the risen Christ.

The Easter season begins on Easter Sunday and then moves forward. We start at the tomb and then set off on the road to Emmaus as we discover the early movements of the disciples and their encounters with Jesus. It can lead us to think about our own life journeys:

What road are you walking right now? (*physically or metaphorically*) What conversations are you having as you go? And where might you, looking back, recognize that your heart was burning within you — even before you knew why?

The story of Emmaus reminds us that faith is not a single moment of arrival. It is a road walked in community, in scripture, in the practice of hospitality, and in the breaking of bread.

In Christ,
Pastor Jessica

Jessica



April 2026

SHARING OUR SUNRISE JOYS AND CONCERNS

“The pastures of the wilderness overflow, the hills gird themselves with JOY –they shout and sing together for JOY” Psalm 65:12-13

Looking out at the steady snow falling and the wind delivering its fury, it's hard to believe that the first official day of spring 2026 is but days away and Easter arrives in just over two weeks. With the most snow we've had all winter covering the brown blades of grass one can only imagine the overflowing pastures and the green hills of which the Psalmist speaks.

And yet, just as the snow will be gone and the sun will come out, we are not promised there will be no gray days and blustery winds – only that God's love is with us through it all giving us hope and a promise of the joy to come. So it is with the events of Holy Week. From the Hosannas of Palm Sunday to the denials of disciples, on the long dusty road to the cross, muscles flinching as He carried his own cross, to the nails so cruelly holding him, to the forgiveness He gave through the pain, it is unimaginable that there is any joy to come. Yet in God's infinite plan, only three days later the stone will be rolled away, the tomb empty, our Christ resurrected. God's plan and promise fulfilled.

“For you shall go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst forth into song and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.” (Isaiah 55:12)

The irony is not lost on me that in only three days the snow I see out my window will have melted into the brown grass, nourishing its roots and bringing springtime with joy and hope. God's promise fulfilled. Three days. Just wait three days for the Risen Lord.

We ask for God's hope to remain with those who are sick or hurting. We pray this month for Lorrie Maki, who fell at her assisted living in Shelby and broke the same hip and is dealing with infection. We ask for patience as she heals and pray that she might soon return to Shelby to share her gifts of music with the other residents in her new home. We ask for God's hand to be upon Fran Lindstrand as she recovers in the hospital. We were blessed to see Pastor Tim Lanham in person when he came to share worship with us on March 1st. It was good to see him recovering from a serious infection last month and we pray for continued progress. Helen DeVoss continues to improve after surgery to improve blood flow to her fingers and for that we give thanks. Millie Sivak had a heart procedure this month and is following instructions by taking it easy while recovering. Continued prayers for Jane Mart as she remains at Benefis Eastview.

It was a joy to have Pastor Tim deliver the message during worship with the help of Hannah Harp. Both also spoke about the joys of going to Glacier Camp and encouraging others to come. Tim also went with Deacons to serve communion to Fran Lindstrand and Joan Green. We are grateful for all the work that our congregation does around the church from coffee hour, to cleaning our facility, helping with the newsletter, serving on committees, counting offerings, teaching Sunday School, etc.etc. And as we found this weekend , plowing and shoveling snow!

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We look forward to the Holy Week Matins and those willing to provide a message or help with breakfast. Please join us. It is one of the most meaningful weeks in our Christian calendar.

“Sing Praises to the Lord, O you faithful ones, and give thanks to His Holy Name. For His anger is but for a moment; his favor for a lifetime. Weeping may linger for the night, but JOY RETURNS IN THE MORNING.” Psalm 30: 4,5

‘HE IS NOT THERE; HE HAS RISEN, JUST AS HE SAID! Matthew 28:6

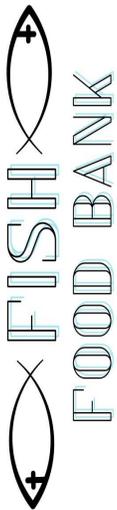
After three days, basking in the Sunshine of the Resurrection, Tana

APRIL 2026 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April Deacons: Jacinte McCullough & Pam Chigbrow

Apr 1	Wed	All Day	Happy Birthday Pastor Jessica & Kim Peachy!
		7:00 am	Matins Service with Continental Breakfast
		6:00 pm	Worship Committee
Apr 2	Thu	7:00 am	Matins Service with Continental Breakfast
		10:00 am	Adult Bible Study
		7:00 pm	Maundy Thursday Worship Service
Apr 3	Fri	7:00 am	Matins Service with Continental Breakfast
Apr 5	Sun	All Day	Happy Easter!
		9:30 am	The Resurrection of Our Lord; Easter Worship
		10:30 am	Fellowship
		10:45am	Egg Hunt
Apr 12	Sun	9:30 am	Worship with Communion
		10:30 am	Fellowship
		10:45 am	Sunday School
		11:00	Deacons Meeting (One Week Later due to Easter)
Apr 15	Wed	6:00 pm	Faith-Life, Outreach, Mission Meeting
Apr 15-17			Pastor Jessica in Omaha for OPSF board meeting
Apr 16	Thu	10:00 am	Adult Bible Study
Apr 19-21			Tim Talks at Glacier Camp
Apr 19	Sun	9:30 am	Worship
		10:30 am	Fellowship
		10:45 am	Sunday School
Apr 20	Mon	All Day	Newsletter Items Due
Apr 26	Sun	9:30 am	Worship
		10:30 am	Fellowship
		10:45 am	Sunday School
Apr 28	Tue	5:30 pm	Session
Apr 29	Wed	10:00 am	Newsletter Folding
Apr 29-30	All Day		Pastor Jessica will be in Kalispell

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Food Suggestions for September:

- + Boxed Macaroni & Cheese
- + Boxed/Bags of Cereal
- + Canned Goods: Chili, Corn, Green Beans, Black Beans, etc..
- + Healthy Snacks (Granola Bars, Dried Fruit, Jerky, Nuts, Trail Mix, etc..)
- + Peanut Butter & Jelly
- + Soup

--> FISH volunteers will be needed: May 11-15, 2026 (Dates could change)

Since our last newsletter came out, Sunrise has donated 24 lbs of food, and we took in \$57 on FISH BOWL SUNDAY, March 15th. Thank you to our wonderful volunteers who worked at FISH the week of March 1-6; Eric Chigbrow, Janette Forsyth, Tana Harp, Karen Sanders & Carol Stilli. You are all very much appreciated! FISH bowl offering will be collected on the fourth Sunday in April rather than the third Sunday. *Thank you to everyone who faithfully contributes to FISH—Maribeth Doan*

“70 for 70” - Each month this year, we will track the number of volunteer hours that Sunrise members are doing in our community. Whether it’s serving as a group filling backpacks, or going on your own to visit homebound folks, or working at home on quilts for kids - we have so many ways that Sunrise has a positive impact on our community.

Help us to track this good work!

Email the office or drop a note in the offering tray each month to let us know how many hours you have volunteered. We will have a chart on the bulletin board next to the office that will track our hours. You can also text Kris (Office Administrator) your volunteered hours, 541-974-2534.

Goal: 70 hours of volunteer work by Sunrise members each month during 2026

Per Capita for 2026 is \$71 per member. Funds will be distributed: \$ 11.26 General Assembly, \$3.00 Synod of the Rocky Mountains, and \$56.74 Glacier Presbytery. Thank you for your support.

Lent & Easter at Sunrise

Palm Sunday Worship followed by fellowship brunch on Sunday, Mar. 29

Matins Services Holy Week at 7am - worship and continental breakfast

Maundy Thursday Worship at 7pm Apr. 2

Easter Sunday Worship with One Great Hour of Sharing collection on Sunday, Apr. 5

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Buildings and Grounds Happenings

The first part of 2026 has been warm and dry, that means our snow removal crew has had it pretty easy. There is still time to learn how to drive the snow plow if you are interested in being a back up driver, contact Scott Shull.

We have upgraded the reader board sign in front of the church. The Internal lights have been replaced with LED lights that are brighter and more energy efficient. The current church logo and correct web-site and email address have been added to the new sign.

The sidewalk extension from the columbarium around the back of the church, connecting both back doors, will be installed this spring when the weather is warm enough. Then sidewalk is being paid for from memorial money.

The work on the manse will resume soon to update the kitchen. The new stove is already here. We will be looking for volunteers to help mow the church lawn this summer. John DeVoss and Dan Agnew have retired after many faithful years of doing this chore.

Submitted by Eric Chigbrow B&G committee co-chair

Presbyterian Church USA Mission Update

The Presbyterian Church USA has historically collected four special offerings through-out the year. We at Sunrise only participate in the Christmas Joy offering collected in December and the One Great Hour of Sharing offering collected at Easter.

The Pentecost Offering and the Peace & Global Witness Offerings were collected for the final time in 2025. They will be replaced with the World Communion Offering in 2026. The Presbyterian Giving Catalog will still be available.

We at Sunrise have been faithful about supporting these special offering over the years. You are invited to read the letter, posted on the downstairs community bulletin board, we received about the giving that has been collected in 2024 and 2025. You will notice that our giving is down about 2/3 from 2024 to 2025.

Our Mission Committee thanks everybody that has and can support these church wide missions in addition to supporting everything that we do locally at Sunrise.

Eric Chigbrow, co-chair of the Faith-Life, Outreach & Mission Committee

We continue to support a variety of environmental initiatives:

Pill Bottle Reuse	Aluminum Can Recycling	Plastic Grocery Bag Recycling	*New* Egg Carton Reuse by GF Food Bank
Pill bottles with child safety lids are cleaned and then sent for re-use in a variety of ways	Aluminum cans are recycled and the money collected goes to cover shipping costs for pill bottles	Plastic grocery bags are collected and dropped off for recycling	1-dozen size egg cartons in good, clean condition are reused by the Great Falls Food Bank as they split eggs out from pallets to smaller quantities

Adult Bible Study: Join us for study and fellowship on the first and third Thursday of each month at 10 am in Fellowship Hall. For winter into Lent, the bible study is revisiting Max Lucado’s book “He Chose the Nails.”

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April	Theme: Journeying in the New Testament	Scripture Reference
1	<i>The Call to Follow</i>	Matthew 4:19
2	<i>The Call to Follow</i>	Luke 9:23
3	<i>The Call to Follow</i>	John 14:6
4	<i>The Call to Follow</i>	Matthew 8:19–20
5	<i>Literal Journeys with Spiritual Meaning</i>	Luke 2:41–52
6	<i>Literal Journeys with Spiritual Meaning</i>	Luke 10:25–37
7	<i>Literal Journeys with Spiritual Meaning</i>	Luke 15:11–24
8	<i>Literal Journeys with Spiritual Meaning</i>	Luke 19:1–10
9	<i>Literal Journeys with Spiritual Meaning</i>	John 4:3–7
10	<i>The Emmaus Road and Resurrection Appearances</i>	Luke 24:13–35
11	<i>The Emmaus Road and Resurrection Appearances</i>	Luke 24:36–49
12	<i>The Great Commission and Sending</i>	Matthew 28:18–20
13	<i>The Great Commission and Sending</i>	Mark 16:15
14	<i>The Great Commission and Sending</i>	Acts 1:8
15	<i>Acts: The Church in Motion</i>	Acts 8:26–39
16	<i>Acts: The Church in Motion</i>	Acts 9:1–9
17	<i>Acts: The Church in Motion</i>	Acts 13:2–3
18	<i>Acts: The Church in Motion</i>	Acts 16:6–10
19	<i>Pilgrimage and the Life of Faith</i>	Hebrews 11:8–10
20	<i>Pilgrimage and the Life of Faith</i>	Hebrews 11:13–16
21	<i>Pilgrimage and the Life of Faith</i>	Hebrews 12:1–2
22	<i>Pilgrimage and the Life of Faith</i>	1 Peter 2:11
23	<i>The Way, Growth, and Movement Toward God</i>	Romans 8:28
24	<i>The Way, Growth, and Movement Toward God</i>	Philippians 3:12–14
25	<i>The Way, Growth, and Movement Toward God</i>	Philippians 1:6
26	<i>The Way, Growth, and Movement Toward God</i>	2 Corinthians 5:6–7
27	<i>The Way, Growth, and Movement Toward God</i>	Galatians 5:25
28	<i>The Destination</i>	John 14:1–3
29	<i>The Destination</i>	Revelation 7:17
30	<i>The Destination</i>	Revelation 21:3–4

Remember you can always visit our current bulletins and newsletters on our website.

Visit www.sunrisegreatfalls.net

If you want to view our bulletins, those are on the home page, scroll down to worship and click on the bulletins. If you want to view the newsletters, click the About Us button and scroll to the bottom to view

April 2026

Committees and Elders:

Admin, Personnel, & Social Media: Scott Shull, Dan Petersen, Marcia Anderson

Buildings & Grounds: Eric Chigbrow, Dan Petersen, Scott Shull, Bill McCullough

Christian Education: Erica Rusinski, Bill McCullough, Rowena Milton

Faith, Outreach, & Mission: Carol Stilli, Eric Chigbrow

Finance, Stewardship, & Memorials:, Scott Shull, Dan Petersen

Nominating: Eric Chigbrow, Marcia Anderson

Worship: Carol Stilli, Marcia Anderson

Clerk of Session: Millie Sivak



Sunrise Board of Deacons:

Chair: Ember Woods

Secretary: Tana Harp Treasurer: Janette Forsyth

Pam Chigbrow, Maribeth Doan, Beth Hoseck, Sandy Lambert, Jacinte McCullough, Sue Petersen

«City». «State» «Zip»

«Address»

«First Names» «Last Name»

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