



# Our Savior's Lutheran Church

1326 1st Ave N., Great Falls MT

A congregation of the  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

April 2025 Newsletter

*God's Work—Our Hands!*

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**Our Savior's Lutheran**  
**Worships each Sunday at**  
**10:00 a.m., with**  
**Refreshments and**  
**Fellowship in the Church**  
**basement following**  
**services.**

**Office Hours are**  
Mon. – Thurs., 9:00-1:00

**Contact us at**  
406-727-4304 or  
officeoslcgf@gmail.com

Visit us on the Web at:  
oslgreatfalls.org

### **Staff**

- Pastor Eric Finsand  
pastoroslcgf@gmail.com  
406-799-7788
- Ellen Forslund—  
Worship & Music  
Director
- Bonnie Knight—Office  
Administrative Assistant
- Tyler Gunderson—  
Sexton



## HOLY WEEK WORSHIP SCHEDULE

### Palm Sunday—April 13th

Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday, a special Congregational reading following Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, His Passion, and His death. As we participate in the readings, all of us find our place in this story of Jesus' courage and love.

### Maundy Thursday

April 17th, 7:00 p.m.

Gather *"on the night in which He was betrayed"* as we remember Jesus' first celebration of Communion with His



followers, we also remember Jesus' preparation for the Cross, and His Command to *"love one another, as I have loved you"*. As we receive communion, space will be available for individual Forgiveness of Sin.

*The Service concludes with the Stripping of the Altar as the Good Shepherd is struck down and the sheep scatter.*

### Good Friday

April 18th

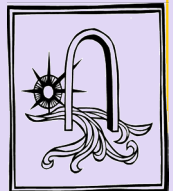
at 7:00 p.m.

Called a Tenebrae Service, we hear the last words of Jesus and share in hymns as we quietly extinguish candles, recalling the mood and scene of that Friday when Jesus was laid in the Tomb.



### Easter Morning— April 20th

Just as Angels' words announced Jesus' birth, so they announce His resurrection. Having broken the power of sin and death on Good Friday, Jesus returns among us to lead us into being God's people—alive with forgiveness and power and grace.



## Words from the Pastor

*This month I share some thoughts about one of the most moving Worship Services of the year, as well as a word about our Special Congregational Meeting set for April 27th.*



While Easter is always special, the Sunday prior is especially poignant. Known as Palm Sunday, it begins with the celebration of Jesus entering Jerusalem on that special day. Worship will begin with a special reading, palm fronds will be waved, and our Choir will process into service as just a sample of what happened that day Jesus finally arrived in Jerusalem as the Lamb of God.

But during the service we will experience something I look forward to year after year. Following the opening liturgy and the initial lessons, we'll turn to a reading of the whole Gospel story of Jesus from his hosting of the Last Supper, through His time in the Garden of Gethsemane, his trial, and ultimately his crucifixion and burial.

The Lectionary offers this reading to us as a threshold through which to enter the whole drama of Holy Week. It foreshadows what we'll remember on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, and it sets the stage for what we'll hear on Easter morning.

But what is especially rich about the service will be that all of us as a congregation will take part in it's presentation. Pulling the words straight from the Bible, we'll be reading that story as a Readers' Theater. A narrator will move us through the story—but along the way persons from within the congregation will stand and read the roles of the characters in the lesson. Peter will rise and speak. Pontius Pilate will stand and speak. The High Priest and the Servant Girl will rise. And along the way, all of us as the congregation will respond as the Disciples or the Crowd.

This Readers' Theater always seems to start off a little slow, feel a little wooden. But it doesn't take long before the drama builds, and having the people sitting next to us becoming the people of the story becomes compelling. And nothing pulls us into the story like speaking together as the crowd, "Crucify him" .....

I'm really looking forward to sharing this Readers' Theater from the Gospel of Luke with everyone. It is the perfect way to gird a heart for Holy Week.

The second through for this month is a word about our upcoming Special Congregational Meeting. At our Annual Meeting this January, I wrote and spoke about the challenge we are facing as we strive to square the chasm between your generous giving and our relentless Budget Deficit. My thoughts included my conclusion that the only remaining route to bridge that gap would be to reduce our Staff Expenses—specifically, moving my role as Pastor from Full Time to Eighty Percent Time.

The push for this move continues to come from our month to month to month deficit. In spite of an increase in overall giving during 2024 of over twenty percent over 2023, we still face a roughly two thousand dollar deficit each month. And while our financial reserves have absorbed this assault, those reserves are not infinite.

And so, on April 27th we'll gather after service to discuss and see if we are at a place of consensus regarding next steps. In essence, the proposal is to transition my role and compensation from Full Time to Eighty Percent— with trims to base salary and compensation moving us pretty close to covering that budget shortfall.

In practice, this transition would see me in a regular schedule of Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday—dropping the Thursday I normally staff. I'd still be available every day via phone, and would shift days in the Office to cover urgent needs or events like weddings or funerals.

While these thoughts were introduced at our Annual Meeting on January 26th, we need to have time as a Church Family to listen to each other and consider options.

So plan on being part of Worship this month—for Palm Sunday to be part of the story of Christ's Passion, for Easter to celebrate the beginning of Christ making all things new, and on the 27th as we consider how we can be stewards of our shared ministry in this season of Our Savior's journey.

**Pastor Eric**



## Lenten Renewal Continues this Month!

This year our Lenten journey will be rich in Renewal and Fellowship as we share midweek services with folks from *First Presbyterian Church*. Our plan is for each congregation to host three Midweek services – the first three at Our Savior’s, the concluding three at First Presbyterian. Holy Week Services will be in our own locations.

A Lenten Soup Supper will also be shared—humble in menu, rich in fellowship!

While no Supper will be offered on March 5th (*Ash Wednesday*), Our Savior’s will host suppers on March 12th and March 19th. First Presbyterian will host the remaining three meals on March 26th, April 2nd, and April 9th.

Both meals and worship will occur in the hosting congregation’s Fellowship Hall. Like the early Church, we will eat and then worship at table.

Our worship will be grounded in a Lenten Midweek Liturgy by Marty Haugen titled “**Holden Evening Prayer**”. Stepping away from the Lectionary, the weekly homilies will follow themes drawn from Dr. Martin Luther’s portion of the *Small Catechism* on *The Lord’s Prayer*. Written as a resource for families to listen to their heritage and talk about their faith around their kitchen table, Luther offers not only the petitions of the *Prayer*, but reflections on what Jesus’ words mean as they leap from page to our heart.



- **March 12th—The Introduction and First Petition.**

What does it mean that God invites us to call on God  
with the trust of a child to a parent?

- **March 19th—God’s Kingdom Come, God’s will be done.**

Where should we expect to see signs of God’s heart—in our world and in our lives?

- **March 26th—Daily Bread**

Remembering that God provides to all, what should be our heart’s response?

- **April 2nd—Forgive us**

Jesus frames this prayer not only between us and God, but us and our neighbor.

- **April 9th—Save us**

Is this not what “Jesus” means—God Saves? Where will God reach us?

# Our Savior's Events during April 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wed	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>March 30</b> 10:00 Worship	<b>March 31</b>	<b>1</b> WELCA Board Meeting—9:30	<b>2</b> 7:30 Men's Sq. 12:00 Bible Study 6:30 Lenten Meal & Worship at 1st Presby.	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> <b>Vicki Dunham Memorial Service</b> <b>11:00 a.m.</b>
<b>6</b> 10:00 Worship 11:15 Sunday School	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> 5:30 Worship & Music Cmt	<b>9</b> 7:30 Men's Sq. 12:00 Bible Study 6:30 Lenten Meal & Worship at 1st Presby.	<b>10</b> 9:30 Quilters	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>13—Palm Sunday</b> 10:00 Worship 11:10 Executive Committee Meeting	<b>14</b> 1:00 Human Concerns Cmt. 7:00 Property & Finance Comt.	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> 7:30 Men's Sq. 12:00 Bible Study 7:00 Church Council	<b>17 Maundy Thursday</b> 7:00 Maundy Thursday Worship Service	<b>18 Good Friday</b> 7:00 Good Friday Worship Service	<b>19</b>
<b>20 Easter!!</b> 10:00 Worship	<b>21</b> <i>Newsletter Deadline!</i>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> 7:30 Men's Sq. 12:00 Bible Study 1:15 Prayer Chain Mtg	<b>24</b> 9:30 Quilters "Ladies Let's Talk" 1:00	<b>25</b> 6:00 Game Night	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b> 10:00 Worship <i>Change for Change</i> <b>Special Congregational Meeting 11:15</b>	<b>28</b> Book Club, Etc. 6:30 p.m.	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> 7:30 Men's Square 12:00 Bible Study	<b>May 1st</b> 9:30 Quilters	<b>May 2nd</b>	<b>May 3rd</b>

FINANCIAL REPORT: OFFERINGS, DISBURSEMENTS & BALANCES as of February 28, 2025			
General Fund	February	Year to Date	2024 YTD
Giving	\$16,294.08	\$38,585.50	\$35,854.83
Interest Inc	\$269.87	\$567.98	\$1,175.88
Expenses	\$18,705.94	\$37,053.20	\$39,470.25
Totals	-\$2,141.99	\$2,100.28	-\$2,439.54

Celebrating April Birthdays	4/19	Michelle Bruner
(Known to the Office)	4/20	Tori Anderson
		Janet Murphy
4/02 Harold Spilde	4/21	Aunika Clemons
4/03 Melissa Horton	4/22	Ruth Allen
4/04 Robin Sainsbury	4/23	Phil Dunham
4/05 Marialyce Martin	4/24	Bob Laird
Abbie Virts		Doris Seaton
4/06 Levi Eberl	4/26	Sharon Odden
4/07 Mark Goetz		Heather Swanson
4/12 Meredith Ludford	4/27	Bob Dickenson
John Proud		Julie Pribyl
4/13 John Goldhahn		Rodney Pribyl
Jocelyn Pritchard	4/28	Nobby Johnson
4/15 Rae Smith		Daryle Odden
4/16 Jim Ronshaugen		Sandra Vanni
4/17 Briana Koontz	4/29	Jeremy Virts
Helen Heglund	4/30	Tyson Brown
4/18 Karissa Ramstead		Eric Finsand

## Special Congregational Meeting

All members of Our Savior's Lutheran Church are encouraged to attend a Special Congregational Meeting on **Sunday, April 27th**, beginning at 11:15 a.m.

The business for the meeting will be conversation regarding our ongoing gap between the congregation's generous giving and our budget needs. For discussion and possible vote are a proposal to transition the role of Pastor from a Full time to an Eighty Percent position—with savings from this change being applied to our budget deficit.

## Serving this April

### April 6th

Usher: Sanna Beerman  
Greeter: Bonnie Knight  
Reader: Volunteer or Pastor Eric  
Altar Guild: Lilli Milton, Kerrie Ramstead  
Fellowship: Jerry & Lorraine Myhr  
Offer. Coll.: Clarice Flanagan  
Counters: Nancy Traner, Judy Ludtke  
Pianist/Organist: Michelle Payton  
Cantor: Ellen Forslund

### April 13th—Palm Sunday

Usher: Emilio Vanni  
Greeter: Amy Ford  
Reader: Volunteer or Pastor Eric  
Altar Guild: Lilli Milton, Kerrie Ramstead  
Fellowship: Jerry & Lorraine Myhr  
Offer. Coll.: Clarice Flanagan  
Counters: Nancy Traner, Judy Ludtke  
Pianist/Organist: Michelle Payton  
Cantor: Ellen Forslund

### Maundy Thursday

Usher: Kerry Ramstead  
Altar Guild: Lilli Milton, Kerrie Ramstead  
Offer. Coll.: Clarice Flanagan  
Pianist/Organist: Michelle Payton  
Cantor: Ellen Forslund

### Good Friday

Usher: Kerry Ramstead  
Altar Guild: Lilli Milton, Kerrie Ramstead  
Pianist/Organist: Michelle Payton  
Cantor: Ellen Forslund

### April 20th—EASTER!!!

Usher: Jerry Ramstead  
Greeter: Kerrie Ramstead  
Reader: Natalie Faltin  
Altar Guild: Lilli Milton, Kerrie Ramstead  
Fellowship: Jerry & Lorraine Myhr  
Offer. Coll.: Clarice Flanagan  
Counters: Nancy Traner, Judy Ludtke  
Pianist/Organist: Michelle Payton  
Cantor: Ellen Forslund

### April 27th

Usher: Gloria Johnson  
Greeter: Carole Miller  
Reader: Volunteer or Pastor Eric  
Altar Guild: Lilli Milton, Kerrie Ramstead  
Fellowship: Jerry & Lorraine Myhr  
Offer. Coll.: Clarice Flanagan  
Counters: Nancy Traner, Judy Ludtke  
Pianist/Organist: Michelle Payton  
Cantor: Ellen Forslund





## **Sikh Memorial Service**

On March 23rd, Our Savior's hosted a funeral for one of our community members—Ms. Manjeet Muhar. This was the first Sikh service ever held in Great Falls! Over 300 friends and family from around the U.S., Canada, and India attended. Thanks be to God for the building we can share!





## Words from FISH

A Huge Thanks to all who supported and participated in this year's Annual "Loaves and Fishes" Dinner! Thank you to all who provided items for the Auction, those who prepared the meal, those who hosted and staffed the event. In hope, people from across Great Falls gathered to not just pray for those who hunger, but take steps to provide the food!



**WOMEN'S SPRING RETREAT**, May 16-18 at Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp. Register by April 22 to get the EARLY BIRD RATE Registration and more info at [www.imluchurch.org/womensretreat](http://www.imluchurch.org/womensretreat) Questions? Contact Nancy Solum at 406-240-0023 or [WomensSpringRetreat@gmail.com](mailto:WomensSpringRetreat@gmail.com). Sponsored by Women of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church of America) Five Valleys and Great Divide Clusters

### Thanks to all the good people

The recent Loaves & Fishes dinner was a huge success. Thank you to those who donated silent auction or raffle items or food, volunteered at the event, and to all who joined in for an evening of good food and surprises. The entire proceeds of the evening are donated to FISH which provides emergency food to those in need in our community.

Thank you again for caring.

FISH Board of directors and Our Savior's Lutheran Church Human Concerns Committee.



**THANK YOU** to the following volunteers who worked at Our Savior's FISH week, February 24-28.

Emil Vanni, Robin Sainsbury, Bev James, Sandy Huston, Renee Lance, Nancy Traner, Lilli Milton, Jerry & Lorraine Myhr, Doris Seaton, Carole Miller, Gloria Johnson, Bonnie Knight, Cherryl Batchelor, Harold Spilde, Fred Martins.

During the week we provided food to 28 families, 35 adults, 25 children and gave out 1,812 pounds of food.

## OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

1326 1st Ave N  
Great Falls, MT 59401

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