

# Sumner Center Newsletter

## April 2026

A great fun hearted poem from Kathy Hawkins to put a smile in your heart today! Thank you Kathy for your joyful words!!

### The Sneaky Squirrel

By Kathy Hawkins

A beautiful day where a crisp wind filtered the air  
A young couple together holding hands without care

Walking along the curvy path on the campus filled with trees  
Where a hefty fee will be imposed if the squirrels are ever teased

The parents followed at a distance from the youngsters in love  
Squirrels running rampant in the tree branches above

Alongside a building a trashcan sat close to the walking path  
Something inside sat in waiting to provide a little wrath

Just as the young couple holding hands approached the trashcan  
They heard the noise inside and looking back yelled squirrel and ran

The mother smiled as she knew exactly what they meant  
The father not hearing their words continued along as he went

Upon reaching the trashcan a mighty squirrel flew wildly out of the bin  
Making the father scream and nearly jump out of his skin

With laughter so hard the tears ran down the young couple's faces  
While the squirrel ran faster than runners in the Olympic races

To this very day the story of the sneaky squirrel still lives  
And once again the laughter and tears it continues to give

So, on these cold days of winter that can be depressing and blue  
Share the story of the sneaky squirrel to brighten the day of a friend or two.



OPEN HEARTS. OPEN MINDS. OPEN DOORS.

**Sunday Worship:  
In Sanctuary at 11:15am  
&  
Sumner Center UMC  
Facebook Page**

Visit our Church Website at:  
<http://www.sumnercenter.com>

**Donations may be sent to our mailing  
address:**

**25378 151st Ave  
Spring Valley, Mn 55975**

**Also via Venmo and Paypal**

### **Pastoral Support Team**

**Pastor Bridget Sheely**

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**Pastor Jon Marburger**

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**Grace and Peace in the  
name of Jesus Christ:** If  
you have items you would  
like to be published in the  
newsletter, please contact  
Pastor Bridget by the 3rd  
Thursday of the preceding  
month by emailing your

information or dropping at Church. The light of  
God remains to shine bright in our community only  
by your generous giving heart! If you would like to  
donate a gift, you may send donations to the  
address above or deliver it in person during Sunday  
morning worship service

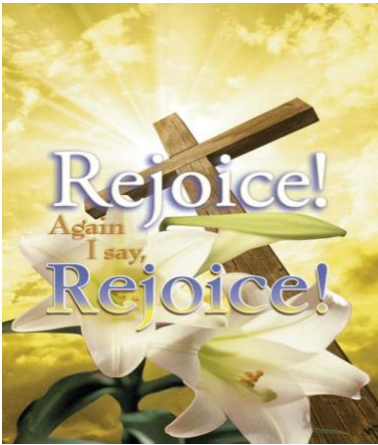
# Calendar of Events

(Subject to change and/or be added to as the need arises)

## April 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 	2 	3  Service @ Dexter UMC 7 pm	4  Holy Saturday
5 11:15 am Worship 	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 11:15 am Worship 	13	14	15	16	17	19
19 11:15 am Worship 	20	21	22 	23	24	25 
26 11:15 am Worship 	27	28	29	30		

# April Worship Schedule



April 5, 2026

Pastor Jon Leading

**Happy Easter!**

Leader: Christ is risen!

**People: Christ is risen indeed!**

Leader: Death has been swallowed in victory.

**People: The grave has lost its sting.**

Leader: Christ is risen.

**People: Christ is risen indeed!**

**And we are alive in Christ! Glory to God! Alleluia!**

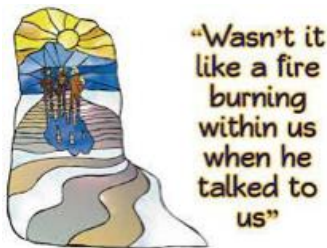
**We Are Invited Into God's Presence and Offer Our Praise**



April 12, 2026

Pastor Jon Leading

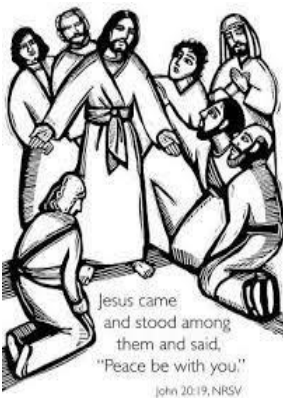
We're still basking in the glow, we're still celebrating, or we should be. Notice today is named "Second Sunday of Easter." That "of" is important. We are Easter people. All of our worship is Resurrection worship. We continue to proclaim that Christ is Risen when we gather for worship during this season and, yes, we can proclaim that all year long because every Sunday is Easter Sunday.



April 19, 2026

Pastor Bridget Leading

We too often want to get back to normal, to the same old, same old. But that's the whole point of Easter; there is no same old anymore. Everything is new. We might be living in a Good Friday kind of world, but we are Easter People. When Peter addressed the crowd with the eleven, he implored them to embrace the change - the "newness" - of life in Christ



April 26, 2026

Pastor Bridget Leading

How we live with suffering and how we acknowledge God's presence in our suffering is what makes us able to endure. There is a presence, a guardian of the soul, that gives us hope. That presence is one who is familiar with suffering. This one walks with us into the suffering. This guardian is a close companion, not one who waits until we make it through on our own and then gives us a gold star or some other commendation. No, this one is right there with us. This one knows us. This guardian cares for us. This is why in addition to being the guardian of our souls, Jesus is the good shepherd.

# 30 Days of Choosing Gratitude

## A Simple Guide to Finding Joy in Everyday Life

Life moves fast. It's easy to focus on what's missing, what's stressful, or what's next on the list. Gratitude helps us slow down and see the good that's already here.

Science shows that practicing gratitude can boost happiness, lower stress, and even strengthen relationships. But gratitude is more than positive thinking—it's a way of shifting our perspective, one day at a time.

This 30-day gratitude guide gives you a simple verse, reflection, and action step each day. Whether you're exploring faith, growing in it, or just looking for a fresh perspective, you'll find that gratitude changes the way you see your life.

### **How to Use This Guide**

*Read the verse* - Each one offers wisdom and encouragement.

*Reflect* - Pause and consider the question for yourself.

*Take the step* - Gratitude grows when we practice it.

Here's the truth, gratitude doesn't always come naturally. It's easy to focus on what's wrong, what we don't have, or what feels unfair. But choosing gratitude shifts our focus. It reminds us that even in hard seasons, there's still something to thank God for.

Think about it: every sunrise, every breath, every friend, every meal, these are daily gifts we can so easily overlook. Gratitude opens our eyes to see that nothing is too small to celebrate.

### **How to Practice Gratitude Daily**

*Start your day with thanks* - Before checking your phone or rushing into the day, pause to name three things you're grateful for.

*Write it down* - Keep a journal or even a note in your phone where you jot down moments of gratitude.

*Share it with others* - Gratitude multiplies when it's spoken.

Send a quick text or tell someone how thankful you are for them.

Below is A 30-Day Challenge. Each day gives you a short Bible verse, a reflection question, and a simple action step. It's a practical way to build gratitude into your routine and see God's hand in your everyday life.

#### **Day 1 - [ ] - Psalm 107:1**

**Reflect** - Where have you seen goodness in your life this week?

**Action** - Write it down and thank God for it.

#### **Day 2 - [ ] - Philippians 4:6**

**Reflect** - What's one worry you can let go of today?

**Action** - Pair it with one thing you're grateful for.

#### **Day 3 - [ ] - James 1:17**

**Reflect** - What everyday gift do you often overlook?

**Action** - Pause and say "thank you" for it.

#### **Day 4 - [ ] - Colossians 3:15**

**Reflect** - When have you felt peace in a hard moment?

**Action** - Breathe deeply and whisper thanks.

#### **Day 5 - [ ] - 1 Chronicles 16:34**

**Reflect** - Who has shown you love recently?

**Action** - Tell them how much you appreciate it.

**Day 6 - ☐☐ – 2 Corinthians 9:15**

**Reflect** - What's one gift you didn't earn but are thankful for?

**Action** - Share your gratitude with someone else.

**Day 7 - ☐☐ -Psalm 100:4**

**Reflect** - What are three things you can thank God for today?

**Action** - Say them out loud.

**Day 8 - ☐☐ – 1 Thessalonians 1:2**

**Reflect** - Who in your life are you especially thankful for?

**Action** - Send them a text or note of encouragement.

**Day 9 - ☐☐ – Ephesians 5:20**

**Reflect** - What's one challenge that's teaching you something?

**Action** - Write it down and thank God for the growth.

**Day 10 - ☐☐ – Psalm 9:1**

**Reflect** - Has a prayer been answered recently?

**Action** - Record it as a reminder of God's faithfulness.

**Day 11 - ☐☐ – Lamentations 3:22–23**

**Reflect** - Where do you see new glimpses of God's mercy today?

**Action** - Start tomorrow by listing three blessings.

**Day 12 - ☐☐ – Psalm 28:7**

**Reflect** - Who strengthens you when you feel weak?

**Action** - Thank God for them—and thank them personally.

**Day 13 - ☐☐ – 1 Timothy 4:4**

**Reflect** - What small joy made you smile today?

**Action** - Capture it in a journal or photo.

**Day 14 - ☐☐ – Psalm 95:2**

**Reflect** - How can worship be an expression of gratitude?

**Action** - Listen to a worship song and thank God.

**Day 15 - ☐☐ – Colossians 2:6–7**

**Reflect** - How has your faith grown roots this year?

**Action** - Write down one way God has helped you grow.

**Day 16 - ☐☐ – Psalm 136:1**

**Reflect** - When have you seen God's mercy in action?

**Action** - Thank Him for it specifically.

**Day 17 - ☐☐ – Jonah 2:9**

**Reflect** - When has God given you a second chance?

**Action** - Write it down as a reminder.

**Day 18 - ☐☐ – Hebrews 12:28**

**Reflect** - What about God's kingdom gives you hope today?

**Action** - Share it with a friend or family member.

**Day 19 - ☐☐ – Psalm 30:11–12**

**Reflect** - Has God ever turned your sadness into joy?

**Action** - Record that memory and thank Him.

**Day 20 - ☐☐ – Colossians 3:17**

**Reflect** - How can you practice gratitude in your work or school?

**Action** - Do one task today with a thankful heart.

**Day 21 - ☐☐ – Psalm 34:1**

**Reflect** - Can you thank God even in a hard circumstance?

**Action** - Speak a prayer of gratitude anyway.

**Day 22 - ☐☐ – Romans 8:28**

**Reflect** - Where have you seen God bring good out of difficulty?

**Action** - Journal that story.

**Day 23 - ☐☐ – Psalm 92:1–2**

**Reflect** - What's one thing you can thank God for morning and night?

**Action** - Write it on a sticky note by your bed.

**Day 24 - ☐☐ – Philippians 1:3**

**Reflect** - Who in your community are you grateful for?

**Action** - Tell them they matter – call, text or send an email or letter.

**Day 25 - ☐☐ – Psalm 118:24**

**Reflect** - What about today can you rejoice in?

**Action** - Speak three things out loud.

**Day 26 - ☐☐ Isaiah 12:4–5**

**Reflect** - How can you tell someone about God's goodness today?

**Action** - Share a short gratitude post online.

**Day 27 - ☐☐ – 1 Corinthians 15:57**

**Reflect** - How does gratitude shape the way you see victory in life?

**Action** - Thank God for your salvation.

**Day 28 - ☐☐ – Psalm 136:26**

**Reflect** - What part of creation makes you grateful?

**Action** - Step outside, look around, and thank God for it.

**Day 29 - ☐☐ – Colossians 4:2**

**Reflect** - How can prayer help you stay thankful?

**Action** - Write out a gratitude-filled prayer.

**Day 30 - ☐☐ – Revelation 7:12**

**Reflect** - How does gratitude prepare you for eternity?

**Action** - End this journey with a prayer of thanksgiving and worship.

Gratitude doesn't have to stop here. When you choose gratitude daily, you'll find more joy, more peace, and more hope, no matter what season you're in.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_

# Happy Easter!

G L C F C Y K Q T W C K L T R C E N E D A R A P  
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jellybeans  
daffodils  
chocolate  
butterfly  
painting  
decorate  
colorful  
flowers  
carrots  
tulips  
Sunday  
Spring  
pastel  
plants  
parade  
family  
Easter  
bonnet  
basket  
peeps  
grass  
candy  
chick  
bunny  
April  
nest  
lily  
lamb  
hunt  
find  
eggs  
duck  
joy  
hop  
fun  
dye

