

MISSOULA FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
WELCOMES ALL PEOPLE OF ANY AGE, GENDER, COLOR, ETHNICITY, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, ECONOMIC STATUS,
OR PHYSICAL ABILITY INTO THE FULL LIFE AND MEMBERSHIP OF THIS CONGREGATION.

TOWER TIDINGS

The Eighty-Seventh Epistle of John

“The Shifting of Attentions” 4-5-26

I recently experienced something surprisingly painful – an infected finger. It seems I had not cleaned out a very small cut I received while working on cleaning out my garage (which is not a space in our house known for its antiseptic qualities!) and some microbial invader gained access into the wound. I will let your imagination fill in the details of disturbing developments and painful sensations that followed as the infection grew to very noticeable degrees; suffice it to say that it was an ordeal that reached its zenith in my finally listening to the excellent advice of my in-house health care professional (my wife!). Tired of my moaning and alarmed at the obvious developments (please consult your previous imaginations), it was she who pointed out that fingers have been lost for lesser infections, thus encouraging me to seek professional assistance, which I finally did. It was rather humbling that the doctor was also quite alarmed at how far the infection had progressed (affirming my in-house health care professional’s diagnosis), but all turned out well as the proper medication was prescribed, the regiment of cleaning out the wound and proper dressing ensued, and a greater appreciation for the wisdom of my in-house health care professional received firmer grounding.

This experience brought home a truth we all experience when pain enters our sphere – it draws various kinds of attention. My initial attention was one of intentional dismissal; feeling the pain, which was unavoidable, kicked my determination into higher gear, but it was the kind of determination borne of ego more than resolution; I was tough, I could take it, it really wasn’t that bad, it was such a small scratch, etc., etc., etc. The litanies I spoke to myself grew out of my desire to return to my default functionality – to get back to my busy days and essential work, to keep from being detoured on my normal flow of life. But pain tends to be deaf to our reasoning, especially when that reasoning misses the point of what is actually happening. The festering invader was immune to any such logic, thus going about its business with abandon until my functioning was compromised. Even from a finger, pain can be an incredibly distracting force, demanding more effective response.

APRIL 2026



† April 5, 2026
Easter

[Acts 10:34-43](#)
[Jeremiah 31:1-6](#)
[Psalms 118:1-2, 14-24](#)
[Colossians 3:1-4](#)
[John 20:1-18](#)
[Matthew 28:1-10](#)

† April 12, 2026
2nd Sunday of Easter

[Acts 2:14a, 22-32](#)
[Psalms 16](#)
[1 Peter 1:3-9](#)
[John 20:19-31](#)

† April 19, 2026
3rd Sunday of Easter
Native American Minis-
tries

[Acts 2:14a, 36-41](#)
[Psalms 116:1-4, 12-19](#)
[1 Peter 1:17-23](#)
[Luke 24:13-35](#)

† April 26, 2026
4th Sunday of Easter

[Acts 2:42-47](#)
[Psalms 23](#)
[1 Peter 2:19-25](#)
[John 10:1-10](#)



I find this experience resonant with the status of our world today, where so much pain has entered the human domain. So very much of it is both human caused and human denied (that is, denied – or excused – or justified? -- by those causing the pain), and for those caught in the crosshairs of those efforts, the suffering inflicted is drawing various kinds of attention. Those who cause the pain are quick to justify or minimize or otherwise support the infliction, but very often the self-interest commentary or party affiliation default is glaringly obvious as they attempt to defend the indefensible. I call to mind an extremely disturbing interview with a military leader overseeing the violent incursion into Gaza where the comment was made that it was simply the price of war that children will die – as if this was ever something to accept as unavoidable, both warfare and the killing of innocents.

A very different kind of attention is needed when such violence infects the human species – and thankfully, such attention is growing. The pain we inflict upon each other is something human will can and must rectify; and perhaps we are reaching the zenith of pain needed to find within ourselves the will to do so. I'm not holding my breath, however, for I sense the pain is continuing to increase for so very many of the marginalized and dispossessed and vilified; I'm not holding my breath, but trying to use my breath more and more to give voice to the changes desperately needed in our world.

I join with many others in the rising voices of those demanding better behavior from our leaders, higher integrity from those in power, greater transparency in the ongoings of human affairs, and truer morality for all endeavors weaving society together. And I find that, in the midst of the increasing voices (both in volume and quantity) advocating for the ones in the world who are hurt most by the world, the voice of Jesus becomes clearer and clearer to us all.

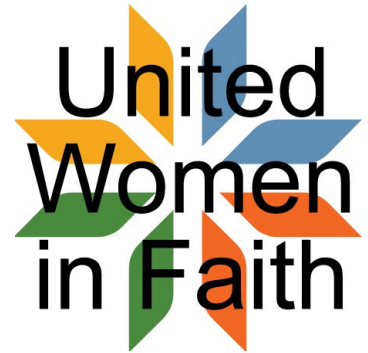
I invite you to join your voice with mine as we continue the effort to pay greater attention to the greater traumas humans inflict upon each other. I invite you to join your actions with mine to see how we can be a part of effecting non-violent, effective change in our world that bears the imprint of divine will. And I invite you to continue to walk with Jesus, as I attempt to do so as well, to discover the ways in which God will help us in our works of transformation, both for ourselves and our world. As we count on God, may we remember God also counts on us. Grace to you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Daniel". The signature is written in dark ink and is centered below the text of the letter.

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH**Inspiration Tool Box**

“There is no limit to what we, as women, can accomplish.”

Michelle Obama

**LOOKING AHEAD**

April 9: Ruth Fellowship meets in Clara Smith Room at 10:00 a.m. to assemble health kits for the YWCA Women's Shelter.

APRIL 15: Vespers Circle will meet in the KDM Library from 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. Call Pasty Hodges at 406-493-0961 for more information.

APRIL 17: Mark your calendars for out-to-lunch, McKenzie River Pizza on BROOKS, 11:30 a.m. Bring a friend! Contact Peg Plimpton, 406-542-1543.

APRIL 17: This month, GEMS Circle will join the April 17th out to lunch group at McKenzie River Pizza at 11:30 a.m. If you need a ride or have questions please call Tish Herries at 406-370-6572. Hope to see you there!

April 28: United Women in Faith invites anyone who is interested to join our book group. We meet the fourth Tuesday of each month at 11 am in the Kay Duffield Memorial Library at church. For more information, contact Kathie Snodgrass (406-531-1569).

MAY 1-3: Fairmont Hot Springs Spiritual Retreat. Registration now open. Please ask Tish for more information, 406-370-6572. NOTE: A scholarship is available for first time attendees. Again, call Tish.

Our UWFaith unit is now facilitated by a Steering Committee rather than by elected leaders. Circles and groups will still meet at their designated times and carry out their mission projects, but there will be no regularly scheduled unit meetings unless specially announced. So, watch for calendar announcement throughout the year. If you have questions, please call or text Elaine at 406-529-1325 or Tish at 406-370-6572.

Foundation News

The First UMC Foundation is offering the Foundation Scholarship to someone who attends regularly or is an active member of Missoula First UMC and is continuing their post-education. The scholarship honors Olive M. Reichel, Ella Turmell, Gordon and Nettie Reynolds, Archie, Joscelyn and Katie Payne.

The application form is available through the office, posted on the bulletin board outside the church office, or online at: <http://www.firstfumcmissoula.org/> then go to the "Learn More" page. Click on the tab and the scholarship link is located there.

The deadline to apply is May 1st. Mail to Missoula First UMC Foundation, P.O. Box 7646, Missoula, MT 59807, Attn: FUMC Foundation.

Mountain Sky 5 Day Academy Opportunity

Mountain Sky 5 Day getting the word out about the upcoming Mountain Sky 5 Day Academy in May. **We must meet our threshold number by April 16th to continue our plans. Don't delay in discerning for yourself or reaching out to another who would be enriched by this Academy. This may be the perfect time to take a break from the day-to-day chaos for a space to breathe, to open your heart wide and to re-root yourself in holy presence.**

The upcoming 5 Day Academy in Mountain Sky conference is May 18-23 and will be held at the Rocky Mountain College campus in Billings, MT. This is the first offering since before the pandemic, so we are trying to re-build the community in this huge 4+ state conference. The faculty will be amazing -- Rev. Dr. [Safiyah Fosua](#) and Ray Buckley! It would be lovely to see you there. There are MtnSky BOLM laity scholarships available. Clergy may use MEF funds for this retreat.

Donations to support the Mountain Sky Academy would be appreciated. You may use this link for a financial donation: <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-Z5QF/campaign/C-164ZS>

Ruth Fellowship Thank You to Congregation

Ruth Fellowship assembled 80 health kits for the YWCA Women's Shelter. Many thanks to you for helping with this annual effort.

THANK YOU
SO MUCH!



Go to the Roxy and See Our Ad!

Yes, our congregation is reaching out to the Missoula community with the good news –we’re in the Heart of Missoula as a congregation offering hope and justice for all people. Go early enough to see the local ads that scroll before the previews, and look for ours:

Looking for **HOPE?**

1st United Methodist
Sunday Gathering: 10:00am
 Nursery & Children's Program
 Coffee and Conversation at 11:00

A Congregation for all people, in the Heart of Missoula.

300 E. Main – across from the Missoula Library
 406-549-6118 | www.firstumcmissoula.org

Church Pledges and Donations

The donation page via the Breeze website can be found at:

<https://firstumcmissoula.breezechms.com/give/online>

Designate where your donation goes when donating an online by using the dropdown menu below the donation amount.

You can also donate via text message: (406) 998-1982 include donation amount and a keyword like “Pledge” or “Building”.

Mail in donations are also welcome.

Contact:

Leslie Uhlenbruck,

Financial Secretary

First United Methodist Church

P.O. Box 7646

Missoula, MT 59807-7646

CONTACT OUR OFFICE

Weekday Hours

Monday-Thursday 9-12

Phone: 406- 549-6118

E-Mail: FUMCmissoula@gmail.com

Website: www.firstumcmissoula.org

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/1stumcmissoula

Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/missoula1stumc/>

PASTOR JOHN

Office: Available Monday-Friday

By phone: 406-549-6118 or
 406-396-8966 (cell)

E-Mail: john@FUMCmissoula.com

Hospital visits: Please call John or the office if you know of someone in the hospital. **Home visits:** upon request.

CHURCH STAFF

John Daniels, *Pastor*

Catherine Thomsen, *Administrative Assistant*

Cheryl Bauer, *Administrative Assistant Sub*

Jim Bauer, Carol Davis, Cara Lightfield.

and Donna McCammon *Office Volunteers*

Leslie Lindley, *Treasurer*

Leslie Uhlenbruck, *Financial Secretary*

Craig Gohl, *Custodian*

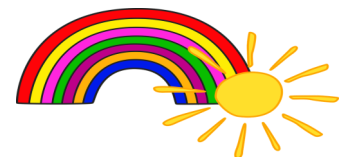
Greg Boris, *Chancel Choir Director*

Jason Triche, *Hand Bell Choir Director*

Luke Larson, *Organist and Pianist*

Cindy Ekstrand, *Sunday School Director*

Lizzie Mills -Low, *Nursery Attendant*



Deadline for May 2026

April 20



Update on our support for Farah and her family, one year later

In June of 2024, FUMC's Mission & Outreach agreed to become US State Dept. Welcome Corps sponsors of an Afghan family trying to flee Taliban oppression (including forced marriages for the young adult women). With our sponsorship, they could come as refugees to Missoula to join relatives here. In February 2025, even after the new Administration shut down all refugee admissions and the Welcome Corps program, the oldest daughter, Farah, flew alone to Missoula with a Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) for Afghans and the financial help of our Drop-By-Drop fund for her airfare. A year later, this resilient young woman, who had been the breadwinner for her widowed mother and younger sisters in Kabul, has become self-sufficient, working at Walmart and part-time at a day care.

With our financial assistance she has received much-needed medical and dental care, is considering a new career with training at Missoula College, and will get a driving license this spring (we're looking for a donated used car in excellent condition). A mentor team of 10 FUMC members is working with Pastor John to support Farah's resettlement and continue raising funds for her family left behind. Farah's widowed mother and 3 young adult sisters remain in Kabul, living in one room of the house of an elderly relative, unable to leave, work, or go to college because they have no male chaperone. We are continuing to support them with modest monthly assistance for food and are actively seeking another country, hopefully Canada, for possible resettlement.

Amidst a dangerous and imprisoning situation, the family remain hopeful for a new future. The miracle of Zoom technology is allowing Lorraine Carlson on our mentor team to provide twice weekly English classes for not only the 3 sisters, but now for 8 younger cousins, boys and girls 6 to 17. The lessons are the high point of their week, and they tell us learning keeps their hope alive for freedom and a better future.

As an unexpected bonus, this January we learned on our Zoom meeting that one of Farah's aunts, a trained and experienced midwife also living in hiding in Afghanistan, needed birthing equipment and supplies for her midwifery work in isolated rural villages with no access to maternal healthcare. Our offer to send \$200 allowed her to purchase an enormous amount of medical and contraceptive supplies. Your support for our effort has now extended to saving the lives of mothers and babies! Farah's sisters are still under threat of being forced into marriage with male relatives against their will which Afghan law allows. It's hard for us to imagine surviving in these conditions, but their hope for a new life of freedom somewhere in the world is undimmed and sustained by their connection with our congregation. By supporting the Drop by Drop fund in Breeze, our team includes you – together we are making a difference in their small corner of the world!

Drop by drop, a river is formed. - Afghan proverb

Tzedakah Pocket Offers Hope

We had quite a bit of activity this month. We paid some bills to help individuals get through the month, paid some storage costs, and paid to help maintain communication devices individuals needed for work. We also paid for several nights at Motel 6 for a couple as well as bought bus tickets to Spokane for them so the wife could get complicated surgery.

A summary of assistance provided by our church's Tzedakah Pocket ministry for the month of March 2026 and Year to Date 2026 are shown below. We help whenever we can with as much as we can. Please continue to donate whenever you are able. We can make a difference for those who come to us for assistance.



Tzedakah Summary

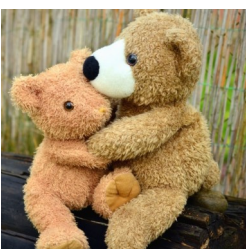
2026 Donations: \$2,748.14

Assistance Paid	March 2026			Year to Date 2026		
	Amount	Fam	Child.	Amount	Fam	Child
<i>Lodging</i>	\$ 492.40	4	0	\$ 492.40	4	0
<i>Rent/ Sec. Dep.</i>	\$ 0	0	0	\$ 0	0	0
<i>Other</i>	\$ 486.74	5	5	\$ 2,023.38	22	22
<i>TOTAL</i>	\$ 979.14	9	5	\$ 2,515.78	26	22

IN OUR PRAYERS...

HEALING, COMFORT, & STRENGTH

- ✚ Hope for the world in this time when it seems in short supply.
- ✚ Prayers of healing for our fractured world.
- ✚ Strength and comfort for Lou and Phyllis W.
- ✚ Healing for Ellie B., who sprained her hip.
- ✚ Strength for Elaine W., as she cares for a sister nearing the end of her life.
- ✚ A quick and successful recovery from hip surgery for Eula R.
- ✚ Strength for James, whose mother is nearing the end of her earthly life.
- ✚ A quick recovery for Theresa H. from her hip replacement surgery.
- ✚ Prayers that Jana's friend will find employment that will pay enough to support living expenses.
- ✚ Continued recovery for Winton K.
- ✚ Recovery & strength for Ed D. from Anaconda, who is hospitalized at St. Pats.
- ✚ A quick recovery and relief from pain for Kay N, who had surgery for a broken leg.
- ✚ A full recovery for Mike G's 5 month old great granddaughter who was diagnosed with viral meningitis.
- ✚ Healing, recovery, & pain relief for Tish H., who had her pacemaker replaced.
- ✚ Comfort and strength for Kathy Y. following surgery.
- ✚ Prayers of support and healing for Donalee.
- ✚ Support for Verle.
- ✚ Healing for Rocky A., and travel mercies for her three daughters.
- ✚ Successful heart surgery for George's friend Tom E., who lives at Missoula Manor.
- ✚ Support for Joseph.



- ✚ Prayers for a family member with down syndrome and cerebral palsy.
- ✚ Prayers for a stronger relationship with God.

THANKSGIVING

- ✚ Joy that Marie recently sang her 80th Palm Sunday Service! (She started when she was 4!)
- ✚ Gratitude for the peaceful No Kings march and rally on March 28th.
- ✚ Joy for the children of our congregation offering their songs in worship, and for Cindy, the Sunday School organizer, who inspires us all!
- ✚ Joy for John T's gift of a new hat from his grandson. Lookin' good!
- ✚ Prayers that hope will be contagious!
- ✚ Hooray for all the ways to approach God!
- ✚ Thanksgiving for all those who have supported the Sunday School children by purchasing supplies and goodies! We love you!!
- ✚ Prayers of thanksgiving for middle schoolers!
- ✚ That TSA and other government employees will soon get paychecks.
- ✚ Thanksgiving that no one was injured by the tornado in Clarksville, IN, where Joe & Karen L.'s daughter lives.
- ✚ Thanksgiving that the Oahu dam will not break.



SYMPATHY

- ✚ Sympathy for Brad W., whose cat, Alexis, recently passed.
- ✚ Comfort for the family of Chuck Norris, following his passing.



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300 E. Main Street
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Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/missoula1stumc/>

Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.

April Events

4/1: Name Tag Sunday 10 a.m. Service

4/4 & 18: Methodist Men, 8:30 a.m. KDM Library

4/9: Ruth Fellowship, 10 a.m. Clara Smith Room

4/15: Vespers, 1:30 KDM Library

4/17: UWF (including GEMS Circle) meet at McKenzie River Pizza
on BROOKS, 11:30 a.m.

4/28: Book Group, 11:00 a.m. KDM Library

May Events

5/1-3: Fairmont Hot Springs UWF Spiritual Retreat. Registration now open.

Weekly Events via Zoom and in person

Sunday Worship: Worship 10:00 a.m. and via Zoom.

(recordings on Facebook or the church website).

Sunday School: During the worship service in the Nursery for kids age 4 and up.

Tuesday: Pastor John's class 10:00 a.m. via Zoom. All are welcome!

Please contact the office for the Zoom link.

Wednesday: Lectionary Bible Class 10:00 a.m. in the Library. Contact Rev. Barry Padget at barryumc@yahoo.com for more information. All are welcome to attend!

**You
belong
here.**