

RESPONDING PRAYER Unison

Creator of all worlds, who appoints us to serve as ministers of justice and peace, examples of righteousness, and teachers of truth, help us to see the fulfillment of your word and the new things you know declare, so we may receive the strength you promise and thereby give a believable testimony to your world. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

INVITATION/PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

***DOXOLOGY**

UMH 95

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION** Unison

We pray, O God, that our offerings delight you. We bring them to encourage all who work for justice and peace on our behalf, that they may not grow faint or be crushed by opposition. May the oppressed find healing, the discouraged receive hope, and those who are bound discover freedom, through and beyond our efforts. Amen!

We Go Forth to Love God and Serve One Another

***CLOSING HYMN**

We Are Called

TFWS 2172

***BENEDICTION**

Pastor Jenny Lee

***POSTLUDE**

Toni Koons(G)/ Sharon Asp (A & SCF)

 **Upper St. Croix Parish
United Methodist Church**

**ONE Parish THREE Churches
“Baptism of the Lord”**



**Grantsburg-Central
Since 1897**



**Atlas
Since 1887**



**St. Croix Falls
Since 1859**

SUNDAY SERVICE:

8:30 AM at Grantsburg with Online Zoom Service
9:45 AM at Atlas (at 10 AM Sunday School)
11:15 AM at St. Croix Falls with Online Zoom Service

CONTACT INFORMATION

Pastor Jenny Lee: jennlee1732@gmail.com
Youth Director Shayna Schmid: snsnyder@gmail.com
Parish Secretary Colleen Norenberg: centralumc2016@gmail.com
Parish Office: 715-463- 2624 **St. Croix Falls Office:** 715-483-9494

www.upperstcroixparish.org

<https://www.facebook.com/UpperStCroixParishUMC>

Upper St. Croix Parish
Grantsburg: Central, Atlas, St. Croix Falls
January 8th, 2023

“Baptism of the Lord”

*Please stand if you are able.

*PRELUDE Toni Koons(G) / Sharon Asp (A & SCF)

* OPENING HYMN *This is the Day* UMH 657

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASSING OF THE GREETINGS

“Peace be with you”

We Celebrate New Life in Christ

*CALL TO WORSHIP Responsive

A voice of power and majesty calls out to us:

I am your God; I have called you in righteousness.

We are amazed that God knows us and calls us.

By God’s breath and spirit, we receive life.

God takes us by the hand and leads us.

In covenant with God, we extend light to the world.

Eyes are opened and prisoners are freed.

Justice and peace prevail, by God’s strength.

Worship with joy and give glory to God’s name.

Listen for the new thing God declares.

We remember that we have been baptized.

May we live as those with whom God is pleased. Amen.

*DEDICATING HYMN *Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty*
UMH 64 (vs. 1 & 4)

OPENING PRAYER Unison (The Apostles’ Creed)

I believe in God, the father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of the Father, and will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen!

CHILDREN’S TIME

UMH 191 (vs. 1)

Sacrament of Holy Communion

INVITATION FOR COMMUNION

Pastor Jenny Lee

CONFESSION AND PARDON Unison

Merciful God,

We confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart.

We have failed to be an obedient church.

We have not done your will,

we have broken your law,

we have rebelled against your love,

we have not loved our neighbors,

and we have not heard the cry of the needy.

Forgive us, we pray. Free us for joyful obedience,

through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(All pray in silence)

Hear the good news: Christ died for us while we were yet sinners;

that proves God’s love toward us.

In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! **Amen.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

UMH 13-14 (See insert)

THE LORD’S PRAYER

GIVING (TAKING) THE HOLY COMMUNION

COMMUNION PRAYER Unison

Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery in which you

have given yourself to us. Grant that we may go into the world in the

strength of your Spirit, to give ourselves for others, in the

name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Proclamation of God’s Word

*THE GOSPEL LESSON

Matthew 3:13-17 (See insert)

This is the word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

“Baptism of Jesus”

Pastor Jenny Lee

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us,
he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his
disciples,

and said: "take, eat; this is my body which given for you.

Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it
to his disciples, and said: "drink from this, all of you; this is my blood
of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the
forgiveness of sins.

Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living
sacrifice,

in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of
faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

**(Together) Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on
these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and
blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ,
redeemed by his blood.**

By your Spirit make us one with Christ,

one with each other,

and one in ministry to all the world,

until Christ comes in final victory and we feast at his heavenly
banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church,
all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever. Amen.

*THE GOSPEL LESSON

Matthew 3:13-17

13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized
by him. 14 John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be
baptized by you, and do you come to me?" 15 But Jesus answered
him, "Let it be so now, for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all
righteousness." Then he consented. 16 And when Jesus had been
baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens
were opened to him and he saw God's Spirit descending like a dove
and alighting on him. 17 And a voice from the heavens said, "This is
my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."

This is the word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

JANUARY CHURCH MISSIONS

ATLAS

Mission committee chair: Peggy Frederickson

INK JET RECYCLING PROGRAM:

Atlas collects and recycles ink jet cartridges and cell phones year-round.



We will collect donations for the Luck Food Pantry.



GRANTSBURG

Mission committee chair: Deb Hammer

BE A "BACK-PACK BACKER"!

REMEMBER ... Every Sunday Is MAC 'N CHEESE SUNDAY! Supporting the Salvation Army's "Happy Kids Back-Pack Program"



Grantsburg will support the following in January:

- Mittens and monetary donations for the Food Pantry in Grantsburg
- Middle School Supplies

ST. CROIX FALLS

Mission committee chair: Kate Murtaugh



Food Shelf
(Communion Sunday)



Sailor Hat Offering:

January's Sailor Hat offering will go to support the Salvation Army

Thank you for your support!

TODAY'S SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

Ministers All God's People
Pastor Jenny Lee

Central:

Pianist Toni Koons
Liturgist **Volunteer Needed**
Acolyte(s) Willow Nyland/Indie Tooze
Snow Removal Tom Goepfert
Fellowship **Volunteer Needed**
Counter **Volunteer Needed**
Cleaning Charlie Glonek and Sandra Erickson
Communion Barb Loomis
Sunday School Younger/Older
LuAnn Martell/Barb Loomis



Atlas:

Pianist Sharon Asp
Liturgist Colleen Adams-Schween
Usher(s) Sue Olson
Acolyte(s) Chase Steffen
Cleaning **Volunteer Needed**
Communion Sue Olson
Sunday School Younger/Older
Volunteer Needed/ Attend in Service

St. Croix Falls:

Pianist Sharon Asp
Liturgist Kathy Gionis
Usher(s) Jim Andrews
Money Counter Peter Gionis
Bell Ringer Jim Sciacca
Flowers Kathy Gionis
Communion Kathy Gionis

BREAKTHROUGH PRAYERS FOR THIS WEEK:

"This kind can come out only by prayer" (Mark 9:29)
Please pray every morning at 8:30, if you are able!

Please pray for our neighbors in need!

PLEASE NOTE:

- 1) **Online Zoom Services are scheduled for this Sunday at 8:30 and 11:15am.** The link will be posted on our parish website and Facebook page.
Click the LINK to Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84147808460?pwd=SDZleFNubmEvaDBlcytTRzVxMFIIZz09>
Phone: +1 312 626 6799,
Meeting ID: 841 4780 8460, Passcode: 568271
- 2) Our Sunday Sermons are on the website at upperstcroixparish.org under Sermons!
- 3) You may watch a recorded video of the service on our parish Facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/UpperStCroixParishUMC>

This Week's Calendar:

Today: Baptism of the Lord Sunday
Happy New Year!

Sunday Worship Service:

- 1/8: "Baptism of the Lord"
8:30 am Grantsburg with Zoom
9:45 am Atlas (at 10 am Sunday School)
11:15am St. Croix Falls with Zoom
- 1/10: 7:00 pm-8:30 pm, Provisional Elder Mentoring Meeting via Zoom
1/11: 6:30 pm, Confirmation Class (A)
1/12: 1:00 pm, Membership Audit Committee Meeting (SCF)
1/14: 8:00 am, UM Men's Meeting (G)

PLEASE NOTE: WHEN WRITING A CHECK PLEASE MAKE IT PAYABLE TO YOUR INDIVIDUAL CHURCH. WHEN THE OFFERING IS MAILED IN WE ARE THEN ABLE CREDIT THE APPROPRIATE CHURCH. THANK YOU!

This Week's Birthdays & Anniversaries

Kenneth Olson 1/13
Jim Loomis 1/14



If you know anyone's birthday or anniversary is missing, please let pastor Jenny know.

Next Sunday (January 15th) Volunteers:

Central:

Pianist	Toni Koons
Liturgist	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Acolyte(s)	Willow Nyland/Indie Tooze
Snow Removal	Tom Goepfert
Fellowship	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Counter	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Cleaning	Charlie Glonek and Sandra Erickson
Sunday School	Younger/Older LuAnn Martell/Barb Loomis

Atlas:

Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Usher	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Acolyte(s)	Copelan Grimes
Cleaning	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Sunday School	Younger/Older <i>Volunteer Needed</i>

St. Croix Falls:

Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Kathy Gionis
Usher(s)	Jim Andrews
Money Counter	Peter Gionis
Bell Ringer	Jim Sciacca
Flowers	Kathy Gionis



mark  your **Calendar**

January Ad Council Meetings

January 15th, SCF; January 17th, G; January 20th, A

January 18, UMW Meeting



January 8th, 2023
Matthew 3:13-17

Pastor Jenny Lee, Ph.D.
Upper St. Croix Parish UMC

“The Baptism of Jesus”

I want to start with something funny that I found on an internet site: After the third dip, the Priest said, “You are now baptized. You are a new creation. The old one is gone; no more drinking alcohol for you. Your new name is Gomes.” Gomes went back home and headed straight for the fridge. He took a Kingfisher Beer, dipped it in water three times, and said, “You are now a new creation; the old one is gone. Your new name is Green Tea!”

I want to talk about baptism today. In summary, John the Baptist invites people to be baptized, saying, “I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me.” Then, Jesus came to him to receive baptism from him. John the Baptist was surprised that Jesus came to him for baptism and said, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” But Jesus said, “Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness.” He baptized Jesus, and when Jesus came out of the water, suddenly, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, the beloved, with whom I am well pleased.”

It is a short passage, but it implies a lot of meaningful messages. First, baptism washes our sins away. Baptism is preceded by our confession of sins and vow to commit to God's community. By baptism, we wash our sins away and become a new person in Jesus Christ, which means we belong to God, not belonging to the world any longer. In other words, we officially become Christians by baptism. It makes us wonder if Jesus ever sinned like us humans. Otherwise, why did he need to be baptized? We find a reference that Jesus had not sinned through a conversation with John the Baptist, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” But Jesus said, “Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness.” Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist because it was a way to fulfill God's ministry. God can work alone, but God wants to work with his people for the people and His creatures. The baptism is a symbol of entering into God's community. Through Baptismal Covenant, we vow before God and our congregation to attend church, grow in the church, and commit to the mission of God. Jesus also, after his baptism, started his public ministry.

We also can identify who we are by baptism. We, Christians, are reborn people in Jesus Christ through baptism. Baptism symbolizes a rebirth in that we die with our sins in Christ, and we are born again in Christ as new people. Second Corinthians says, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Corinthians 5:17). We Christians, who are new creations, live according to the Holy Spirit, not according to the flesh. If we complain or blame people or the world, it can be evidence that the Holy Spirit is not in us. The Holy Spirit keeps us in peace and joy. Suppose we are joyful and harmonious with one

another in Christ. We know about the people who complained in the wilderness and who died in the wilderness without seeing the Promised Land. The mindset of gratitude leads us to happier lives and makes us vitalized by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, let us have a more grateful mindset and express it to one another in 2023.

At Jesus' baptism, as God identified Him, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you, I am pleased," God justifies us, the children of God by baptism. We are beloved by God. God is with us always in the Holy Spirit. Therefore, we can serve people in all circumstances with gratitude. After being baptized, as he began his public ministry, baptism symbolizes that we initiate God's ministry in the church community's unity. We learned that Jesus served people. Jesus' ministry was a servant ministry. Jesus also said himself, "I came to serve people, not be served." Jesus said, "The Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). He became a friend to the poor, the weak, and the powerless. He fed them, cared for them, and healed them. He served them, even washing their feet. In a society of Israelites, washing others' feet was the servants' job. He showed his disciples how they should serve others.

The baptism of Jesus reminds us of our own baptism. Some of you may not remember your baptism because you might have been baptized as an infant. But don't worry because God still remembers you. Even though we don't remember, God confirmed that we are God's children at our baptism. God keeps us in the baptismal covenant, which we may commit to the kingdom of God in our life.

When we were baptized as babies, we couldn't confess sins and vow to commit to God's community. However, our parents, godparents, guardians, and congregation confessed our sins and vowed for us. Therefore, baptism is not only a one person or family event, but the whole faith community and God's kingdom celebrating the event. We were baptized because of the grace of God. The Methodists call it "Prevenient grace," which means God loves everyone before they have knowledge or believe in Him. God's prevenient grace leads people to think of God and guides them to believe in God. All people and all creatures are under the prevenient grace. Baptism, perhaps, is just the starting point of God's epiphany as the triune God. Through the Lord's baptism, the triune God finally presented the Holy Spirit like a dove and God the Father with a voice upon God the Son Jesus Christ. One of the reasons ministers administrate baptism in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is that we believe that at the baptism, the Triune God is presented as the Baptism of Jesus shown in the scripture.

We all are the debtors of God's grace and love. Therefore, we cannot judge anyone, but only pray for them and love them as God loves us. Let us pay forward God's love to one another this year. Let us thank church leaders, community leaders, and government leaders and pray for them. As we have a new year, may we have new hope to love and care for one another, experiencing God's epiphany in everyday life. Thanks be to God! Amen!