

RESPONDING PRAYER Unison

God of love, who sent us Jesus, and who welcomed us into your family through the waters of baptism, we seek once again to know the risen Christ in our midst and to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit so that we may see your presence among us, and we may hear your voice. You are our God. We are Easter people who live with the Risen Christ, and who love you and your people. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

*After each prayer request:
Pastor: Lord, in your mercy,
All: Hear our Prayer.*

PRAYER SONG

This is our prayer. This is our prayer, O God!

UMH 487

THE LORD'S PRAYER

INVITATION/PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

***DOXOLOGY**

UMH 95

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION** Unison

Thank you, God, for the privilege of joining with Christ in the proclamation of your love for all people. May the ministries we support serve to unite people across all differences, building up the body of Christ and reaching out to the world with healing energy. Bless these gifts and all who give in any way to make your love known. Amen!

We Go Forth to Love God and Serve One Another

***CLOSING HYMN**

Open My Eyes, That I May See

UMH 454 (vs. 1 & 3)

***BENEDICTION**

Pastor Jenny Lee

***POSTLUDE**

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

Please take a plant home with you as a way of sharing life. If you want to share your seeds or plants, please bring them to the church and share them with others.

Worship Resources "Taught by Love" by Lavon Bayler.

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

The 2023 Parish Ministry Theme:
"Fill My House" (Luke 14:23)

Third Sunday of Easter



Grantsburg-Central,
Since 1897



Atlas, Since 1887



St. Croix Falls,
Since 1859

SUNDAY SERVICE:

9:00 AM at Grantsburg with Online Zoom Service

10:00 AM at Atlas (10:15 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
April 23rd, 2023
Third Sunday of Easter

*Please stand if you are able.

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

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASSING OF THE GREETINGS

Leader: Our Lord Jesus Christ is risen!

All people: Jesus is risen. Hallelujah! Amen!

Leader: Peace be with you!

All People: And, also with you!

We Celebrate New Life in Christ

***CALL TO WORSHIP** Responsive

God has called us together for this time of worship.

God is listening to our thoughts and to our speaking.

God inclines an ear to us and hears us.

God knows us better than we know ourselves.

Let us open our hearts to the One who gives us life.

Let us set our faith and hope in God.

In one another's presence, we renew our vows.

Together we offer our thanksgiving sacrifice.

God's promises to us are ancient and ever new.

God is with us here and on all the roads we travel.

Together we lift our voices in songs of praise.

Together we recognize we are precious in God's sight. Amen.

***DEDICATING HYMN** *Sweet Hour of Prayer*

UMH 496 (vs. 1 & 2)

OPENING PRAYER Unison

Wondrous God, present with us when we do not know it, valuing us when we do not care for ourselves, planting in us the seed of your word even when the soil of our hearts is hard and unyielding, open our eyes to recognize you here. May we sense your presence next to us. May we hear your voice. May we know your touch. May we see

you in one another and in beauty all around us. May your reality emerge deep inside each life, transforming our thoughts and deeds and our relationship with one another. Amen.

CHILDREN'S TIME

UMH 191 (vs.1)

Proclamation of God's Word

***THE GOSPEL LESSON**

Luke 24:13-35

13 Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, 14 and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. 15 While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, 16 but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. 17 And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad. 18 Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?" 19 He asked them, "What things?" They replied, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, 20 and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. 21 But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. 22 Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, 23 and when they did not find his body there they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. 24 Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see him." 25 Then he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! 26 Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?" 27 Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

28 As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. 29 But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to stay with them. 30 When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. 31 Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, and he vanished from their sight. 32 They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?" 33 That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem, and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. 34 They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!" 35 Then they told what had happened on the road and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

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

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

"Do you See What I See?"

Pastor Jenny Lee

APRIL CHURCH MISSIONS

ATLAS

Mission committee chair: Peggy Frederickson

INK JET RECYCLING PROGRAM:

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



LOAVES & FISHES NEEDS OUR ONGOING SUPPORT

April Collection:

Toothbrushes, toothpaste & paper towels.



Easter Special offerings" 10% of the Easter offering went to support the Ukraine.



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"



APRIL SHOWERS

Let's shower the church with needed supplies.

Toilet bowl cleaner, Dusting spray, Multi-surface disinfectant spray, Bleach – 1 gal, Room deodorizer (solid, not spray), Hand soap - pump, Hand sanitizer - pump, Distilled water 1 gallon (for piano), 9V Batteries, D Batteries, Paper towels, Toilet paper, Kool-Aid or Crystal Light, Lysol Lime & Rust, Coffee-regular, Ziplock bags- sandwich, quart and gallon.

ST. CROIX FALLS

Mission committee chair: Kate Murtaugh



(Communion Sunday)

Food Shelf

Sailor Hat Offering:



Sailor Hat offering will go to support UMCOR.



Thank you for your support!

TODAY'S SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

Ministers

All God's People
Pastor Jenny Lee

Central:

Pianist
Liturgist
Acolyte(s)
Snow Removal
Fellowship
Counter
Cleaning
Sunday School

Toni Koons
Volunteer Needed
Willow Nyland
Tom Goepfert
Volunteer Needed
Volunteer Needed
Charlie Glonek and Sandra Erickson
Younger/Older
LuAnn Martell/Barb Loomis



Atlas:

Pianist
Liturgist
Usher(s)
Acolyte(s)
Cleaning
Sunday School

Sharon Asp
Sue Olson
Jamie Steffen
Copelan Grimes
Volunteer Needed
Younger/Older
Cheryl Olson/Colleen Adams-Schween

St. Croix Falls:

Pianist
Liturgist
Usher(s)
Money Counter
Bell Ringer
Flowers

Sharon Asp
Jim Andrews
Jasmine /Karen Sciacca
Peter Gionis
Jim Sciacca
Ladies of the church



Break through Prayers:
1) *Baby Lila (in the hospital)*
2) *Baby Harley (going to surgery)*

PLEASE NOTE:

- 1) **Online Zoom Services are scheduled for this Sunday at 9:00 and 11:15 am.** 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: Third Sunday of Easter
Christ is risen, Hallelujah, Amen!

Sunday Worship Services:

- 4/23: Third Sunday of Easter
9:00 am Grantsburg with Zoom
10:00 am Atlas (10:15 am Sunday School)
11:15 am St. Croix Falls with Zoom
- 4/23 2:00 pm Pastor Jenny Leads Worship Service at C.C.C.
- 4/25 10:00 am May Newsletter Information Due
- 4/25-4/27 Pastor Jenny on Vacation
- 4/26 6-7:30 pm Youth Gathering at Grantsburg
- 4/29 9:30 am-2:30 pm District New Ministry Strategy Team Training at First UMC in Tomah, WI

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!

Important Dates
and INFORMATION

Pastor Jenny on vacation April 25th - 27th. She will have no office hours the fourth week of April.

4/30-5/1 Pastor Jenny at Provisional Elder retreat at Pine Lake Camp

Next Sunday (April 30th) Volunteers:

Central:

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

Atlas:

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Pianist | Sharon Asp |
| Liturgist | Colleen Adams-Schween |
| Usher | Sue Olson |
| Acolyte(s) | Chase Steffen |
| Cleaning | Volunteer Needed |
| Sunday School | Younger/Older Josie Grimes/Jamie Steffen |

St. Croix Falls:

| | |
|---------------|-----------------------|
| Pianist | Sharon Asp |
| Liturgist | Jim Andrews |
| Usher(s) | Jasmine/Karen Sciacca |
| Money Counter | Peter Gionis |
| Bell Ringer | Jim Sciacca |
| Flowers | Ladies of the church |



THIS WEEK'S BIRTHDAY'S & ANNIVERSARIES

| | |
|----------------------|------|
| Julie Branstad | 4/24 |
| Jim & Barbara Loomis | 4/25 |
| Dustin Kunze | 4/26 |



If you know anyone's birthday or anniversary is missing please let Pastor Jenny know. Thank you!

April 23, 2023
Luke 24:13-35

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



“Do You See What I See?”

I want to start with something funny that I found on an internet site: A Minneapolis couple decided to go to Florida to thaw out during a particularly icy winter. They planned to stay at the same hotel where they had spent their honeymoon 20 years earlier. Because of their hectic schedules, it was difficult for the couple to coordinate their travel plans. So the husband left Minnesota and flew to Florida on Thursday, while his wife planned to fly down the following day. The husband checked into the hotel. There was a computer in his room, so he decided to send an email to his wife. However, he accidentally left out one letter from her email address and sent the email without realizing his error.

Meanwhile, somewhere in Houston, a widow had just returned home from her husband’s funeral. He was a Baptist minister who was called home to glory following a heart attack. The widow checked her email, expecting condolence messages from family and friends. But after reading her very first email, she screamed and fainted. The widow’s son rushed into the room, found his mother on the floor, and saw the computer screen which read:

To: My Loving Wife

Subject: I've Just Arrived Today. I know you're surprised to hear from me. They have computers here now, and you can send emails to your loved ones. Since I've just arrived, I wanted to send you an email. Everything has been prepared for your arrival tomorrow. I am looking forward to seeing you then! I hope your journey is as uneventful as mine was.

P. S. It sure is hot down here!!!

Today is the Third Sunday of Easter according to the Christian Calendar, Lectionary. After Easter to Pentecost, we call these times “Eastertide.” We call them the first Sunday of Easter, the Second Sunday of Easter, the Third Sunday of Easter, etc. After Easter has a little different meaning. “After Easter” means that “it is done after it happened,” but “of Easter” means we are still “in the Easter season.” We are “Easter People.” We may still say, “Christ is risen indeed!” and celebrate it. But it is not as familiar to us as if the greeting, “He has risen!” which is applicable only on Easter Sunday. I wonder why we forget the joy of Easter so fast. Some say joy in life is for a moment, but sadness is for a whole life time. It is life. It is what it is. What do you think?

This is how I thought before I met the risen Christ in my life. However, meeting Jesus in the hospital changed my life. To tell you the truth: He didn’t change my life, but my mindset. Even though I believe in Jesus and served God and God’s people, I also experienced much sadness in my life: I’ve lost my father, mother, elder sister, and my beloved American mommy. I also experienced failures, which meant my life didn’t bring me where I wanted it to. However, there were differences between the times before and after I met the risen Christ. Even though I lost my loved ones, I still hope to see them again.

Because I believe in Jesus and his teachings and promises, such as resurrection, eternity, and *Emmanuel* (God is with us), even though I sometimes fail, I know that failures cannot bring me to the end of the world because I believe in God. God is only the beginning and the end. Since I believe in God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, I can see hope everywhere. There are wars, poverty, violence, injustice, death, suffering, diseases, and more disasters in the world than we know. However, God is the living God. God is still working for the world because “God so loved the world” so much so that He gave His Only Son. And then, I think God will

never give up on the world because He made and gave His only Son. Jesus used to say, “My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working” (John 5:17). Yes, that’s why I am hopeful even though I see the grieving world. Do you see what I see?

If we are too sad, we may not see hope. It was when I lost my mother that I couldn’t see any hope for a while. I planted a new church after I graduated from a seminary in Korea. Our church grew slowly. I started the church with one of my colleagues in the seminary. At six months, we still didn’t have anyone attending Sunday services. However, we had services every morning, Wednesday, Friday night, and Sunday. After six months, we had one attendee in service. And then I started a preschool along with church ministry. The preschool was good with many kids, but the church only had a few attendees in service. After one year, the preschool started, and we had many church members. They were mostly the preschool kids’ parents and their family members. Finally, our church and preschool were good with many members, but then my mother passed away.

I felt like I lost everything. My grief was too much, and I couldn’t see any hope. Yes, I believed in God, but my enormous sadness and grief hid my hope for the future. However, my siblings told me, “You are a servant of God. Ask your God what you are going to do.” And I went to a prayer place to pray to God. And I found what God wanted me to do. I saw hope, my future, and God’s plan for me. So, I prepared to come to the United States and was finally able to come. Yes, we Christians can be in the grief of loss. However, we don’t stay there, but move forward as God leads us.

In today’s scripture, there are two disciples. They may have been in a huge crowd when Jesus did miraculous work for the hungry and the sick. They may have been one of the people who ate a piece of bread among the five thousand people. They may have been there when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. They may have been in a huge crowd when Jesus entered Jerusalem, waving palm leaves. They may have been there in a group when Jesus was crucified. And they may have been among the disciples who talked about Jesus’ resurrection. Even though they saw many miraculous works and learned many teachings from Jesus, they were full of sadness, grief at the loss, and disappointment. Their sadness, suffering, and disappointment hid their hope. Even though they opened their eyes, they couldn’t see the risen Christ with them. Walking with the risen Christ, they just talked about sadness and disappointment negatively. They were with Jesus but couldn’t see the risen Christ while discussing the negative and suspicious story. And they went down along with sorrow, despair, discouragement, and disappointment. However, when they heard Jesus’ story in the scripture and prayed for meals with gratitude, they opened their eyes and ran up to Jerusalem again.

Please pay attention: The two disciples might be like you. You experienced our church’s prosperous times because you grew up in this church. Once upon a time, you may have been proud of being a Methodist member. However, we are now in need of help because of reduced membership and financial resources. Now, you may worry about the church’s future. Too much worry might hide the *Emmanuel* God, who is with us. If you still can’t see the risen Christ, throw the negative mind away. We are in Eastertide. The risen Christ is here with us. We are Easter people who live in the hope that God works for us. We, Christians, are the people who live in the hope of resurrection, the hope of eternity, and the hope of the future because God is still at work for us. Please open your eyes, and see how God works for us. Thanks be to God. Amen!