

witnesses through the church, the body of Christ. Bless those who move forward with another step to a new beginning. May all of us be witnesses of Jesus' love and grace so that all the world may be enlightened and transformed through us. Amen.

NO. 2023-21
May 21st, 2023



Upper St. Croix Parish United Methodist Church

HOLY CONFIRMATION (A)

(See insert)

Candidates: Copelan Grimes and Chase Steffen

SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

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

PRAYER SONG

UMH 487

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

THE LORD'S PRAYER

INVITATION/PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

*DOXOLOGY

UMH 95

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION Unison

May our offerings express our care for one another and our commitment to serve the world in the name of Christ. Help us to use well all the resources you entrust to us. Equip us, as forgiven and forgiving people, to carry the good news to people we meet every day as well as to unknown sisters and brothers who live in desperate circumstances we can scarcely imagine. May our gifts and our lives praise you. Amen!

We Go Forth to Love God and Serve One Another

*CLOSING HYMN *God Be with You Till We Meet Again*
UMH 672 (vs. 1 & 2)

*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.

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

Ascension Sunday
Graduation/Confirmation Sunday



Grantsburg-Central,
Since 1897



Atlas, Since 1887



St. Croix Falls,
Since 1859

SUNDAY SERVICE:

9:00 AM at Grantsburg with Online Zoom Service
(9:15 AM, Sunday School)

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
May 21st, 2023
Ascension Sunday
Graduation/Confirmation Sunday

*Please stand if you are able.

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

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASSING OF THE GREETINGS

Peace be with you!

(Waive your hands at one another)

We Celebrate New Life in Christ

***CALL TO WORSHIP** Responsive

In awe and wonder, we lift our eyes to the heavens.

We raise our songs of joy to the Ruler of all time and space.

Sing praises to God, sing praises;

Shout to God with loud songs of joy.

We gather to remember the One who shared our common lot.

Jesus Christ, who visited this earth, dwells in heaven.

We celebrate the life and ministry of Jesus.

We rejoice in the hope to which Christ has called us.

We open ourselves to baptism with the Holy Spirit.

We expect to be empowered as witnesses in today's world.

We seek a spirit of wisdom and revelation.

We are here to be filled with power from on high. Amen.

***DEDICATING HYMN** *How Great Thou Art* UMH 77 (vs. 1 & 2)

OPENING PRAYER Unison/Copelan Grimes (A)

As Christ ascended to heaven, our spirits are lifted to you this day, O God. Your Spirit fills all the universe. We dwell within your embrace and cannot escape from your watchful care. You are with us here, choosing us as apostles and instructing us in the way we should go. Focus our limited understanding on the person of Jesus, that all he did and taught might come alive in us during

this hour. Grant to us convincing proof of your promises as we welcome your winds of change in our lives. Amen.

BLESSING OUR GRADUATES

Mikala Hammer (G), Olivia McNally (G), Renee Tooze (A),
Joseph Murtaugh (SCF)

CHILDREN'S TIME (G)

UMH 191 (vs.1)

Proclamation of God's Word

***THE NEW TESTAMENT LESSON** Acts 1:6-14 Chase Steffen (A)

6 So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" 7 He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." 9 When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. 10 While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. 11 They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away. 13 When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying: Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. 14 All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

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

Thanks be to God.

SERMON "Another Step to a New Beginning" Pastor Jenny Lee

We Respond to God's Word

RESPONDING PRAYER Unison

God of all times and places, whose promise of the Holy Spirit is for us as well as for generations past, let your blessing fall on us while we are together, clothing us with the resources to be your

THE APOSTLE'S 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, and is seated at the right hand of the Father, 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.

PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS

BLESSING

The Sacrament of Holy Confirmation

I have baptized you
with **WATER;**
but he
will baptize you
with the
**HOLY
SPIRIT.**

Mark 1:8



Confirmed: May 21st, 2023
at Atlas United Methodist Church
Luck, Wisconsin

HOLY CONFIRMATION

INTRODUCTION TO THE SERVICE

PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATES FOR CONFIRMATION

Candidates: Copelan Grimes (Mentor: Cheryl Olson)
Chase Steffen (Mentor: Mariah Gaffey)

CONFIRMATION & MEMBERSHIP VOWS

1. Do you here, in the presence of God, and of this congregation, renew the solemn promise and vow that you made, or that was made in your name at your Baptism? If so, answer,
“I DO.”
2. Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior and pledge your allegiance to His Kingdom? If so, say,
“YES.”
3. Do you receive and profess the Christian faith as found in the Old and New Testament? If so, say,
“I DO.”
4. Do you promise to continue to read God’s Word and to allow His teachings to live in you? If so, answer,
“I PROMISE WITH GOD’S HELP.”
5. Do you promise according to the grace given you, to live a Christian life and always remain a faithful member of Christ’s Holy Church? If so, say,
“I DO”.

PRAYERS OF THE CONFIRMANDS

COMMENDATION AND WELCOME

Pastor: Do you, as Christ’s body, the church, reaffirm both your rejection of sin and your commitment to Christ?

People: We Do.

Pastor: Will you nurture one another in the Christian faith and life and include these persons now before you in your care?

People (& mentors): With God’s help we will proclaim the good news and live according to the example of Christ. We will surround these persons with a community of love and forgiveness, and pray for them that they may grow in their trust in God and in service to others, and be true disciples who walk in the way that leads to life.

Pastor: As members of this congregation, will you faithfully participate in its ministries by your prayers, your presence, your gifts, and your service?

People: I will



Pastor: Members of the household of God, I commend these persons to your love and care. Do all in your power to increase their faith, confirm their hope, and perfect them in love.

People: We give thanks for all that God has already given you and we welcome you in Christian love. As members together with you in the body of Christ and in this congregation of the United Methodist Church, we renew our covenant faithfully to participate in the ministries of the church by our prayers, our presence, our gifts and our service, that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.

MAY CHURCH MISSIONS



ATLAS

Mission committee chair: Peggy Frederickson

<p>INK JET RECYCLING PROGRAM:</p> <p>Atlas collects and recycles ink jet cartridges and cell phones year-round.</p> 	<p>LOAVES & FISHES NEEDS OUR ONGOING SUPPORT</p> <p>Requested items: Bread, eggs, milk, cheese, fresh vegetables (carrots, potatoes), fresh fruit (apples, oranges), canned meat, dish soap, lotion, toothpaste, toothbrushes, paper towels. They appreciate any and all donations.</p>	<p>We will be supporting Native American students through UMCOR</p> 
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GRANTSBURG

Mission committee chair: Deb Hammer

<p>BE A "BACK-PACK BACKER"!</p> <p>REMEMBER ... Every Sunday Is MAC 'N CHEESE SUNDAY! Supporting the Salvation Army's "Happy Kids Back-Pack Program"</p> 	 <p>In May we will support Grantsburg elementary school kids. Financial donations are requested and will be used at the discretion of the school's social worker to help meet the needs of the students.</p>
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ST. CROIX FALLS

Mission committee chair: Kate Murtaugh

 <p>Food Shelf (Communion Sunday)</p>	<p>Sailor Hat Offering:</p>  <p>The Sailor Hat offering will go to support the St. Croix Falls Food Shelf</p>
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Thank you for your support!

TODAY'S SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

Ministers	All God's People Pastor Jenny Lee
Central:	
Pianist	Toni Koons <i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Liturgist	Willow Nyland <i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Acolyte(s)	LuAnne Martell <i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Mowing	Charlie Glonek and Sandra Erickson
Fellowship	Younger/Older
Counter	LuAnn Martell/Barb Loomis
Cleaning	
Sunday School	



Atlas:

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

Summer Break-VBS coming soon

St. Croix Falls:

Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Karen Sciacca
Usher(s)	Jim Andrews
Money Counter	Karen Sciacca
Bell Ringer	Jim Sciacca
Flowers	Ladies of the Church
Fellowship	Ad Council members



Break through Prayer:

- 1) *Baby Lila (Recovering at home)*
- 2) *Baby Harley (Upcoming surgery)*
- 3) *Joan Zeigler and Colleen Adams-Schween*
- 4) *Naomi McLean (Pioneer Home)*

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: Ascension Sunday/Graduation & Confirmation Sunday
Congratulations all our Graduates: *Mikala Hammer (G), Olivia McNally (G), Renee Tooze (A) and Joseph Murtaugh (SCF)*
Congratulations all Confirmands: *Copelan Grimes (A) and Chase Steffen (A)*

Sunday Worship Services:

- 5/21: Graduation/Confirmation Service
9:00 am Grantsburg with Zoom (9:15 am, Sunday school)
10:00 am Atlas (no Sunday School)
11:15 am St. Croix Falls with Zoom
5/21 12:15 pm Ad Council Meeting (SCF)
5/23 6:30 pm, SPRC Meeting with DS Rev. Barb Certa-Werner
5/24 6:00-7:30 pm Youth Gathering (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!



- 5/28 Pentecost Sunday
5/31 Youth Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser at Central UMC in Grantsburg. Money raised will go to support the youth summer camp.
6/4 10:30 am USCP Joint Service at St. Croix Falls UMC
6/9-6/12 WI UMC Annual Conference

Next Sunday (May 28th) Volunteers:

Central:

Pianist	Toni Koons
Liturgist	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Acolyte(s)	Willow Nyland
Mowing	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
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	Sue Olson
Usher	Colleen Adams-Schween
Acolyte(s)	Chase Steffen
Cleaning	Volunteer Needed
Sunday School	Younger/Older <i>Summer Break-VBS coming soon</i>

St. Croix Falls:

Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Karen Sciacca
Usher(s)	Jim Andrews
Money Counter	Karen Sciacca
Bell Ringer	Jim Sciacca
Flowers	Ladies of the Church

THIS WEEK'S BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Emily & Daniel Rahkola 5/21
Laura Drohman 5/21
Brad Rehbein 5/21
Wendell Hauble 5/22
Sharon & Dave Huff 5/22



May 21st, 2023
Acts 1:6-14

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



“Another Step to a New Beginning”

I want to start with something funny that I found on an internet site: A 21-year-old is hired by a hardware store. He shows up for his first day of work at 8 AM sharp. The boss welcomes him, then hands him a broom. “First, sweep out the store. Then I’ll show you where the window cleaning equipment is.” “Sir,” the young man protests, “You can’t be serious. I’m a college graduate.” “Oh, sorry,” says the manager, pointing to the broom. “No problem. I can show you how that thing works.”

Today, we celebrate the achievements of our graduates and confirmands. I know all graduates and confirmands are excited to celebrate their achievements and for their adventure of the next chapter of their lives to begin. To such adorable young people, it is time to grow in faith; also, it is time to be ready for disappointment. You may wonder what I mean by that. Well, when we come to the end of one thing and move forward to another, starting anew, it is time to be ready to grow in faith. In other words, it is a time to be prepared for disappointment, which will test our faith.

Okay, here is a question for all of you. How many times have you experienced a situation that has gone differently from what you had expected? I am sure that has happened countless times for all of us. I’ve experienced it many times myself. I was disappointed, full of despair, depressed, lost confidence, and was despondent at times. However, every moment I was disappointed, I knew I had grown my faith in God, and then I could abide in God more firmly.

My first huge disappointment was when my mother passed away. Here is my story: After experiencing God’s healing of my broken spine, I had accepted God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit as my Savior and my healer. I had been baptized, graduated from seminary, and planted a new church. I was convinced that God was my supporter; my provider; my guide, rock, and helper; so whatever I asked of Him, I trusted God would do for me. Yes, God did provide, somehow, and the church was growing, and preschool went well. Moreover, my back became healthy. My blessings were growing day by day!

But then God took my mother away from me. I was disappointed in God. I didn’t know why God took my mother away from me. I lost my faith in God. I stopped my church ministry because I didn’t trust Him any longer. I decided I would go against God by fasting. I didn’t eat anything for five days first, feeling depressed and hopeless. After fasting for seven days, I started reading the scriptures to find out why God took my mother away and to see if I had done anything wrong to God. The more I fasted, the more energy I gained. And then, I found many biblical people also had experienced the same or something similar. Here is one example:

You may know the prophet, Elijah. Elijah won a victory over the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and four hundred prophets of Asherah on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:16-19:8). Moreover, God listened to his prayers, and God sent rain to Israel, which they hadn’t had for three years. He was excited about victorious work in destroying all idols in Israel, but he ran away from Queen Jezebel. He went into the desert to avoid her punishment, and he was full of despair, depressed and disappointed in God. What? I was surprised at that point by what God had done to him; how had he wronged God? However, I found that even at the moment of his disappointment in God, God was

with him. God sent him an angel, feeding him to make him strong enough to move forward towards a new beginning. We may find in the scripture how much he was disappointed in God and how God cared for him: “While he himself went a day’s journey into the desert. He came to a broom tree, sat down under it, and prayed that he might die, saying, ‘I have had enough, Lord. Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors.’” Then he lay down under the tree and fell asleep. An angel touched him all at once and said, ‘Get up and eat.’ He looked around, and there by his head was a cake of bread baked over hot coals and a jar of water. He ate and drank and then lay down again.” And the angel came to him a second time and fed him again until he got up and moved for a new beginning, which founded God’s people and new leaders of Israel. You know that Elijah is the one who lifts up to heaven, riding a chariot of fire without death (2 Kings 2:1-18).

I noticed that, yes, the great prophet Elijah also had experienced a moment of disappointment in God, but God was there with him. Whenever we have bad things happen, God may not remove the bad things from happening to us, but God may be there and wait for us to gain the strength to move forward to a new beginning. So, I finished the fast for forty days, and prepared for coming into the United States to study in a Ph.D. program and become a pastor. And here I am today.

Today’s scripture is known as an ascension story of Jesus, but we may view this story from the perspective of his disciples. It would be a graduation story of the disciples: Jesus called the twelve disciples, and taught them for three years. One was dropped among the twelve, and the rest came up here. Sometimes they argued about who would get the higher position; sometimes they didn’t understand Jesus’ teachings; they ran away when Jesus died on the cross, but now, they gathered together with Jesus. And it is, indeed, time to separate from their teacher, Jesus Christ. They were all done after three years, but they feared moving forward without their teacher and Master. They felt like it was the end of the world. See verse 6. They asked Jesus, “Lord, is this when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?” They meant was it was the end of the world. Jesus answered, “It is not for you to know the time or period that the Father has set by his authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” It is time for them to leave their teachers in order to have a new beginning. However, as Jesus promised, they received the Holy Spirit, who would be with them forever.

For all graduates and confirmands, it is time to move forward to a new beginning with more responsibilities, taking more risks, and having more opportunities to make your own decisions as you leave your parents’ direct protection. Your parents may not always be there for you, but they will be with you through their prayers so the Holy Spirit may guide, protect, and help you.

Don’t fear your future: That moment will be your growth point. Through that, you may be strengthened, empowered, and grow in your faith and wisdom in God. Be strong and courageous because you will lead the world. The God who is with your parents will also be with you forever. Thanks be to God! Amen!