

## SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

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

NO. 2023-20  
July 23rd, 2023

## 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

Thank you, God, for the rich heritage of faith we have received from our ancestors. We are grateful that your Spirit is ever with us, assuring us of your acceptance and love. May our offerings share this good news with other children of God who have not yet discovered their identity. May all of us grow in righteousness that we might together experience the reality of your realm in our daily lives, here and now and for all eternity. Amen!

### *We Go Forth to Love God and Serve One Another*

\*CLOSING HYMN *Be Still, My Soul* UMH 534 (vs. 1 & 2)

\*BENEDICTION Pastor Jenny Lee

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



# Upper St. Croix Parish United Methodist Church

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

8th Sunday After Pentecost



Grantsburg-Central,  
Since 1897



Atlas, Since 1887



St. Croix Falls,  
Since 1859

## SUNDAY SERVICES:

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

*10:00 AM at Atlas (Sunday School-summer break)  
11:15 AM at St. Croix Falls with Online Zoom Service*

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Pastor Jenny Lee: [jennlee1732@gmail.com](mailto:jennlee1732@gmail.com)

Youth Director Shayna Schmid: [snssnyder@gmail.com](mailto:snssnyder@gmail.com)

Parish Secretary Colleen Norenberg: [centralumc2016@gmail.com](mailto:centralumc2016@gmail.com)

Parish Office: 715-463- 2624 St. Croix Falls Office: 715-483-9494

[www.upperstcroixparish.org](http://www.upperstcroixparish.org)

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

**Upper St. Croix Parish**  
**Grantsburg: Central, Atlas, St. Croix Falls**  
**July 23rd, 2023**

---

\*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**

God has searched us and knows us.

God knows when we sit down and when we rise up.

**God searches out our path and our lying down.**

**God is acquainted with all our ways.**

Before a word is on our tongues, God knows it.

God's hand is ever available to guide us.

**Such knowledge is a wonder to us.**

**It is beyond anything we can attain.**

We cannot escape from God's spirit.

There is nowhere to flee from God's presence.

**Darkness is as light to our God.**

**God illuminates the way before us. Amen.**

**\*DEDICATING HYMN**    *A Mighty Fortress is Our God*

**UMH 110 (vs. 1 & 2)**

**OPENING PRAYER**    **Unison**

**Search us, O God, and know our hearts. Test us and know our thoughts. We gather with eager longing to know, ever-present God, and to be known by you. We want to live as your beloved children. Assure us in these moments that you hear our prayers, even as your will is revealed to us. Fill our dreams and our waking hours with radiant hope. May every time of encounter move us to awe and fervent worship. Lead us in your way everlasting. Amen!**

**CHILDREN'S TIME (G)**

**UMH 191 (vs.1)**

**Proclamation of God's Word**

**\*THE GOSPEL LESSON**

**Matthew 13:24-30; 36-43**

24 He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field, 25 but while everybody was asleep an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and then went away. 26 So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. 27 And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, 'Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?' 28 He answered, 'An enemy has done this.' The slaves said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?' 29 But he replied, 'No, for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. 30 Let both of them grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.' "

36 Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field." 37 He answered, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; 38 the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, 39 and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. 40 Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. 41 The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, 42 and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!

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

**Thanks be to God.**

**SERMON**

*"It is God's Job, not Ours"*

**Pastor Jenny Lee**

**We Respond to God's Word**

**RESPONDING PRAYER**    **Unison**

**Ever-present God, to whom each of us is fully known, and before whom we bow in awe, grant that we may live as children of your realm, listening for your word, responding to your call, and following the way of Christ. Inspire us to witness to your glory, bear fruit to benefit all your children, and grow together in light and love, that all the world may come to know you and honor your reign. Amen.**

# JULY 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

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.

### *We appreciate your ongoing support!*

1. We will focus on financial support of our church to help expand our ministry.
2. Donate items for the thrift sale (8/5)

## 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"

CUMC's mission for July is to help support Atlas United Methodist Church financially and through donations to their Thrift & Bake Sale and scheduled for August 5th. Donations can be dropped off at Central for delivery to Atlas prior to the sale. Thank you for your continued support of the Upper St. Croix Parish.

## ST. CROIX FALLS

Mission committee chair: Kate Murtaugh



**Food Shelf**  
(Communion Sunday)



### Sailor Hat Offering:

*The Sailor Hat offering will go to support Harbor House*

Thank you for your support!

## TODAY'S SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

Ministers

All God's People  
*Pastor Jenny Lee*

### Central:

Pianist  
Liturgist  
Acolyte(s)  
Mowing  
Fellowship  
Counter  
Cleaning  
Sunday School

Toni Koons  
*Volunteer Needed*  
Willow Nyland  
*Volunteer Needed*  
*Volunteer Needed*

Dave Huff  
Charlie Glonek and Sandra Erickson  
Barb Loomis

### Atlas:

Pianist  
Liturgist  
Usher  
Acolyte(s)  
Cleaning  
Sunday School

Sharon Asp  
Sue Olson  
Colleen Adams-Schween  
*Volunteer Needed*  
*Volunteer Needed*  
Younger/Older  
*Summer Break-VBS: Aug. 7th-10th*

### St. Croix Falls:

Pianist  
Liturgist  
Usher(s)  
Money Counter  
Bell Ringer  
Flowers  
Fellowship

Sharon Asp  
Kathy Gionis  
Jim Andrews  
Peter Gionis  
Jim Sciacca  
Ladies of the Church  
Ad Council Members



**Break through Prayers:** Please pray for those who are moving and transitioning in their lives.

## 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](http://upperstcroixparish.org) under Sermons!
- 3) You may watch a recorded video of the service on our parish Facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/UpperStCroixParishUMC>
- 4) We will also send you a weekly bulletin and written sermon through post mail and email. If you have any questions regarding the mailing weekly materials, please contact our parish secretary, Colleen Norenberg.

## This Week's Calendar:

Today: 8th Sunday after Pentecost; God bless you all!

### Sunday Worship Services:

7/23: 8th Sunday after Pentecost

9:00 am	Grantsburg (9:15 am, Sunday School)
10:00 am	Atlas (No Sunday School)
11:15 am	St. Croix Falls

7/25:	7:00pm	Pastor Jenny attends Shepherd Team Meeting via Zoom
7/26:	6:30pm	SPRC Meeting via Zoom
7/27:	5:00 pm	VBS Staff and all Volunteers Meeting (G)
7/27-7/30:		Polk County Fair

**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!**

## VBS is from August 7th - August 10th

**First Registration Deadline: by July 14th (All Kids will get a shirt)**

**Second Registration Deadline: by July 28 (Kids may not get shirts)**

We need your help as volunteers. A sign-up sheet is available.

Find a spot and be a part of Vacation Bible School.

**Questions: Contact Shayna Schmid (Youth Director)**

## Next Sunday (July 30th) 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	Barb Loomis



### Atlas:

Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Colleen Adams-Schween
Usher	Cheryl Olson
Acolyte(s)	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Cleaning	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Sunday School	Younger/Older
	<i>Summer Break-VBS: Aug. 7th-10th</i>

### St. Croix Falls:

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

## Upcoming Events

July 30, All Kid's Pool Party Grantsburg Pool  
August 5, Thrift & Bake Sale (A)

## THIS WEEK'S BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

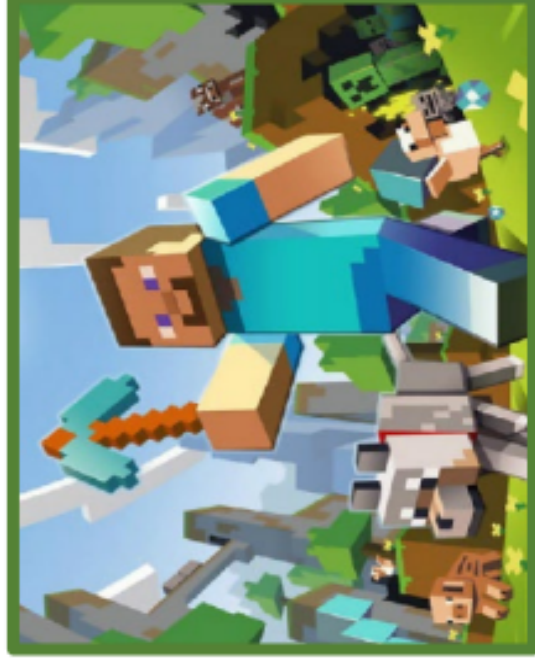
Marguerite Walsten	7/23
Betty Doolittle	7/24
Logan Smestad	7/26
Roxane Brock	7/27
Jim Andrews	7/28



# MINECRAFT THEMED VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Is your child looking for something to do this August?

**Parents  
need a  
break for  
a few  
hours?**



*Don't feel  
like  
cooking for  
the kids?*

**Have us entertain and feed them dinner!!**

UPPER SAINT CROIX PARISH is having an  
evening VBS August 7<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> nightly  
from 4:30-7:30 pm.



**Where: 301 N PINE STREET, GRANTSBURG**

**When: August 7-10 4:20-7:30 each night**

**Who: Children Ages Kindergarten to 6th grade**

**Register by calling or texting Shayna at 920-312-2857**

**Register by July 14 for free t-shirt.**

**Registration closes July 28 at 6pm.**

**We look forward to seeing everyone at our  
Minecraft themed Vacation Bible School!**

**Atlas United Methodist Church**  
**Annual Thrift and Bake Sale**  
**Saturday, August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023**



Downtown Atlas  
2110 295th Avenue/County Road B  
9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

\*\*\*\*\*\$5/BAG SPECIAL BEGINS AT 12:00\*\*\*\*\*

**Most Items**  
**Free Will**  
**Offering**

Household items, holiday  
decor, clothes, books,  
picture frames  
and much more!!



**BAKE SALE**

Lots of great baked goods for  
sale as well!!

July 23rd, 2023  
Matthew 13:24-30;36-43

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



## **“It’s God’s Job, not Ours!”**

I want to start with something funny I found on an internet site: Two little boys were best friends at church, but they both had a reputation for getting into trouble. One Sunday, one of the boys was home sick, but the other boy behaved twice as bad as usual, not wanting to let his friend down. As he was running through the sanctuary after church, the pastor grabbed him and angrily said, “Where’s God?” The little boy was frightened and didn’t know what to say. The pastor continued, “I want you to go home and think about it, and I don’t want you to come back until you can tell me where God is.” The boy went home and called his sick friend on the telephone. “Guess what,” he said, “We are in big trouble. They’ve lost God and are trying to blame us for it happening because of us.”

Where is God? Have you lost God? We sometimes have fear in our life journey even though we believe in God. If you are full of fear, worry, and anxiety, perhaps in those moments you’ve lost God. I had the experience of losing God, and I found him again last week.

I went to Colorado Springs, CO., last week on a retreat. On the second day, we went up to “Pikes Peak,” a rocky mountain of about 14,115 feet. We didn’t study “Pikes Peak” well, but we knew it is about 14,115 feet, and you might feel cold. We drove up for a while, expecting to take a shuttle at a certain point to go up to the mountaintop. I was with two friends in our car. We got lost on the way and tried to contact our other team, but the phone didn’t work on the mountain. We just went up and up, missing the point of getting a shuttle. It was so scary and likely risky to drive a car: one side was a cliff; the other side was a rocky wall, and the road was a steep uphill climb. We couldn’t enjoy the scenery, but screamed and laughed a lot because it was too scary to see out of the car window. The scary thing is we didn’t know how far we had to go to get there. We got to the very top of the mountain and it took about one hour. For us, it was a risky adventure. We just sat there for a while without enjoying the beautiful scenery on the mountaintop because it was so scary. When we came back down, we prayed to God, saying, “Don’t be afraid, but be strong. Your God, the creator of all things, is here with you. He will hold the car wheel for your safety.” So, we came down with peace in our hearts and minds. Do you think we were afraid because we didn’t pray when we went up there? No, we actually had prayed. The only thing that made us afraid was that we didn’t know where we supposed to go and how long it would take us. So, it was a moment to experience life and death, and finally, I was born again with a new life.

At times when I’ve face difficult moments, I used to think, ‘It is fine. It will be gone soon,’ and then I found peace. If we know our future clearly, we may not fear it. Uncertainties lead us to have anxieties and worries. If we didn’t achieve a goal, we may have fear. We are Christians and should trust and believe in God’s guidance with his steadfast love and grace. The Apostle Paul says, “Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do, forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called us heavenward in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:14). Forget anything that makes you anxious, but go ahead toward God to win a heavenly reward because you are the precious child of God.

When Joshua became the leader of the Israelites after Moses died, he was afraid because he thought he couldn’t lead the people like Moses did. However, God was present before him and said, “No one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, I will be with you. I will never leave you

nor forsake you” (Joshua 1:5). God who had promised Joshua, now promise us, “I will be with you as I was with Abraham, Moses, Jacob, and your ancestors. I never leave you nor forsake you.” We are confident we are saved in faith through Jesus Christ by the grace of God. Therefore, we will be well in God. Don’t worry at all but pray to God with thanksgiving, and God leads us at peace (Philippians 4:6).

Today’s scripture is another sower’s parable story. The sower planted good seeds in his field of good soil in this story. It is not like planting the seeds on a path, rocky ground, or thorny bushes, but in a field of good soil. It sounds good so far. But, the enemy came at night and planted weed seeds in the field. So, servants worried about what to do with the weeds and asked the owner if he had to pull them out. The owner replied, “No, for in gathering the weeds, you would uproot the wheat along with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest. And at harvest time, I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.”

It is very clear that if you have a garden, you should understand it. When I began to garden, I pulled all weeds out and cultivated the garden, adding good soil. And I planted good seeds in it. However, I found lots of weeds sprouting out with the veggies I planted. The strange thing is that I could not distinguish between the veggies and the weeds until they grew. After they grew together, when I could figure out which ones the veggies were, I wanted to pull all the weeds out so my veggies to get more nutrition. However, I usually mistakenly pull the veggie out along with the weeds. So, I could personal understand this parable story through my own experiences. How about you? Could you relate to this story?

This parable story is also about the life we live in the kingdom of heaven, which is reigned by God. Well, you may think that we are not in heaven yet. If you live in a God-centered faith, there might be the kingdom of God. This parable begins by saying, “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field.” The kingdom is not a space, but Jesus Christ himself. Verse 37 explains, “The one who sows the good seeds is the Son of Man, and the field is the world; the good seeds are the children of God.” Our Savior, Jesus Christ, planted good news in us, and we live in the world.

Therefore, the children of God and the children of the world live together. However, we can’t say, “Christians are the children of God; non-Christians are the children of the world” because we don’t know who has good faith in God, but only God knows. Judging is not our job; that’s God’s job. Sometimes we may ask God by when we have to endure bad people. Today’s scripture is the answer. We have to go together until we sit before God’s throne. However, don’t worry about how long you have with the people who give you concern because “the one who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus” (Philippians 1:6).

The kingdom of God is in you and among us as long as we live in a God-centered faith. Don’t worry about where God is. God is here, in you and among us. God may handle the world. Our job is to take care of all people, whether good or bad, as the servants have to take care of the owner’s field without pulling the weeds out yet. If we do so, we will shine like the sun in the kingdom of God. Thanks be to God. Amen!