

RESPONDING PRAYER Unison

Everlasting God, whose law is perfect and whose judgments are just, speak and act among us today to challenge all we do in your church and in our lives. Let us make a faithful community, the body of Christ so we may be raised to new life and become authentic witnesses to your love in all we do, wherever we go, that the world might come to know and serve you. Amen!

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!

INVITATION/PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

***DOXOLOGY**

UMH 95

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION Unison**

We bring our offerings, O God, not to buy your favor, but to express our gratitude, not to support an institution, but to further your mission. We support the church in its efforts to challenge the false wisdom that pervades our culture. We seek to make this community of faith a center of values that are consistent with your will. May we be zealous in your service, willing to sacrifice for love's sake, and eager to embrace your word in our everyday living. Amen!

We Go Forth to Love God and Serve One Another

***CLOSING HYMN** *Here I Am, Lord* **UMH 593 (Vs. 1 & 2)**

***BENEDICTION** **Pastor Jenny Lee**

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

Worship resource "led by Love" by Lavon Bayler

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

The 2024 Parish Ministry Theme:
"Let's Replant it" (Galatians 6:7-10)

Membership Caring Month/Third Sunday in Lent



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 (No 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: snssnyder@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

March 3rd, 2024

Membership Caring Month/Third Sunday in Lent

*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

The heavens are telling the glory of God.

The firmament proclaims God’s handiwork.

We celebrate the steadfast love of God, our Creator.

Surely God is faithful to all who live in covenant.

From the sun’s rising to its setting, the creation speaks.

Day and night, earth’s creatures announce God’s works.

The commandments of God are clear, enlightening the eyes.

God’s law is perfect, calling forth our best.

God’s foolishness is wiser than human wisdom.

God’s weakness is stronger than human strength.

The ordinances of God are true and righteous.

In following them, we gain wisdom and strength. Amen.

*DEDICATING HYMN *We Are the Church* UMH 558 (vs. 1 & 2)

OPENING PRAYER Unison

All-wise and all loving God, we are drawn together in this place because all our knowledge and discernment is not enough to give meaning to our lives. All the pieces of our busy days need a center, and we have come to see that center in the “foolishness” of the cross. There, Love went the distance for us. There, the paths of service were lifted up above our passion for personal gain. We are frightened by what you might ask of us, but we long for the wholeness only you can offer. Let the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable to you, O Lord, our rock and our redeemer. Amen!

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 you love,

we have not heard the cry of the needy.

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

through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(prayers 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

RECEIVING 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 NEW TESTAMENT LESSON

1 Corinthians 12:12-27

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

Thanks be to God. Amen!

SERMON

“We are the Body of Christ!”

Pastor Jenny Lee

(Membership Caring Month #1)

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 NEW TESTAMENT LESSON

1 Corinthians 12:12-27

12 For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. 13 For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

14 Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. 15 If the foot would say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. 16 And if the ear would say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? 18 But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. 19 If all were a single member, where would the body be? 20 As it is, there are many members yet one body. 21 The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” 22 On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, 23 and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect, 24 whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, 25 that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. 26 If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.

27 Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

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

Thanks be to God. Amen!

MARCH CHURCH MISSIONS



ATLAS

Mission committee chair: Ashleigh Olson

<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: cooking oil (smaller and larger), mayonnaise, sugar 4# size, bar soap, dish and laundry soap. Personal products for men and women.</p>	<p>Jackson Area Ministries Gardening Project</p>  <p>We will be collecting garden seeds to support the Jackson Area Ministries Gardening Project. Please see the bulletin board or March newsletter for more details. Thank you!</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!</p> <p>Supporting the Salvation Army's "Happy Kids Back-Pack Program"</p> 	<p>Harbor House Crisis Shelter</p> <p>We will be collecting donations to support the Harbor House Crisis Shelter in Superior, WI. Please see the bulletin board or March newsletter for more details.</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><i>The Sailor Hat offering will go to support Polk County Drug Court.</i></p> 
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Thank you for your support!

TODAY'S SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

"Membership Caring Month"

Ministers All God's People
Pastor Jenny Lee

Central -Grantsburg

Pianist Sharon Asp
 Liturgist **Volunteer Needed**
 Acolyte(s) Willow Nyland
 Fellowship **Volunteer Needed**
 Counter **Volunteer Needed**
 Cleaning Sandra Erickson & Charlie Glonek
 Communion Barbara Loomis

Atlas

Pianist Sharon Asp
 Liturgist Sue Olson
 Usher **Volunteer Needed**
 Cleaning **Volunteer Needed**
 Sunday School No Sunday School
 Communion Sue Olson

St. Croix Falls

Pianist Sharon Asp
 Liturgist Karen Sciacca
 Usher(s) Jim Andrews
 Money Counter Karen Sciacca
 Bell Ringer Jim Sciacca
 Flowers Lynn Hanson
 Communion Jim & Karen Sciacca



To Our Volunteers



Breakthrough Prayers:

Please pray for those who are in need, the sick, those who have lost loved ones, and for God's peace for all over the world!

PLEASE NOTE:

- 1) **An Online Zoom Service is scheduled for this Sunday at 9:00 am at Central at 11:15 am by request.** 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=SDZleFNubmEvaDBlcytTRzVxMFIzZ09>
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>
- 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: Membership Caring Month/Third Sunday in Lent
God bless you!

Worship Service Schedule

- 3/3: 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
- 3/5: 10:30 am -1:00 pm, Pastor Jenny volunteers at Loaves and Fishes in Luck.
- 3/6: 6:30 pm -8:00 pm, Senior Youth Gathering (G)
- 3/7: 9:00 am, North West District Clergy meeting via Zoom
5:30 pm Soup Supper (SCF)
6:15 pm Lenten Study Session #2 (SCF)
- 3/8: 1:30 pm, Ad Council Meeting (A)
5:00-8:00 pm, Junior Youth Family Worship and Game Night (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!

The Week's Birthdays and Anniversaries

Chaz Norenberg 3/3
Megan Branstad 3/5
Mariah Gaffey 3/8
Steve Sylvester 3/8



Next Sunday (March 10th)

VOLUNTEERS

Central -Grantsburg

Pianist Toni Koons
Liturgist **Volunteer Needed**
Acolyte(s) Willow Nyland
Fellowship Toni & Georgeanne Koons
Counter **Volunteer Needed**
Cleaning Sandra Erickson & Charlie Glonek

Atlas

Pianist Sharon Asp
Liturgist Colleen Adams-Schween
Usher Sue Olson
Cleaning **Volunteer Needed**
Sunday School Josie Grimes

St. Croix Falls

Pianist Sharon Asp
Liturgist Karen Sciacca
Usher(s) Jim Andrews
Money Counter Karen Sciacca
Bell Ringer Jim Sciacca
Flowers Lynn Hanson

Upcoming Events-Mark Your Calendar

- Lenten Bible Study, 2/29, 3/7, 3/21, and 3/28
- March 19th, SPRC meeting via Zoom
- March 23, Easter Spring Craft & Bake Sale (A)
- March 28, Maundy Thursday service (SCF)
- March 29, Good Friday Service (G)
- Youth Retreat, April 19-21 at Wood Lake Camp
(Contact their Youth Director)



Youth Group Retreat Donation Needs

Youth group is going on a retreat to Wood Lake Bible Camp April 19th to 21st.

We are looking for donations for our weekend to save costs. Please reach out to Shayna with any questions 920-312-2857.

- Old T-shirts
- Fleece Scraps
- Empty Water Bottles
- Yarn
- Fabric Fill
- Socks (don't need to be pairs)
- Snack bags of Chips
- Individual wrapped snacks (No Nuts)

Donations can be left in the church office or given to Pastor Jenny. Thank you for your support!



Youth retreat benefits:

Developing community with other believers who are dealing with similar circumstances in life

Refocusing on and growing in relationship with God

Intentional time for prayer and meditating on Scripture

Learning from and being mentored by godly adults

Spending time surrounded by God's creation

Having fun

March 3rd, 2024
1 Corinthians 12:12-27

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



“We are the Body of Christ” (Membership Caring Month #1)

I want to start with something funny that I found on an internet site: A pastor visits an elderly woman from his congregation. As he sits on the couch, he notices a large bowl of peanuts on the coffee table. “Would you mind if I have a few? He asks. “No, not at all!” the woman replied. They chat for an hour and as the pastor stands to leave, he realizes that instead of eating just a few peanuts, he emptied most of the bowl. “I’m terribly sorry for eating all your peanuts. I really just meant to eat a few,” he says. “Oh, that’s all right,” the woman says. “Ever since I lost my teeth all I can do is suck the chocolate off them.”

Following Stewardship Month, we observe March as “Membership Caring Month.” Every year in January, the Annual Conference requests that all local churches submit the Statistical Report, formerly known as the Ezra Report. The name ‘Ezra Report’ is derived from the report made by the Prophet Ezra, which listed the exiles who returned from Babylon. The Annual Conference seeks to understand the status of all local churches because the United Methodist Church is a connectional church. Once we submit the report, our church committee, especially the Administrative Council, Financial, and Trustee chairs work diligently. I appreciate all our wonderful leaders.

As I review our annual report to the Conference, I approach it with empathy for each of our parishioners: who they are, what they do, and how they are involved in church ministry. In other words, we may need to remind ourselves of who we are and why we gather here every Sunday morning. That’s the reason we began to observe March as “Membership Caring Month.”

Today, as the first session of my membership sermon series, I want to talk about how “We are the Body of Christ.” When you hear a word “church,” what comes to mind first? It might be

the church building. A church building is something visible that we can see and touch. When people speak of “going to church,” they usually mean going to the church building. We often refer to the church building as “the house of God.” However, if a congregation doesn’t have a physical building and meets at a different physical location, such as a school gym, campground, or another building, to worship God, and have fellowship in Christ, can we still call that place a church?

We may call it, a “Faith Community,” “a Fellowship Community,” or “a Family in Jesus Christ,” which means that the church encompasses not only building, but also its “people.” The church refers to the community of believers. If you believe in Jesus Christ and have given your heart to Him, then you are part of the church. The church is its people—those who have one thing in common: they believe in Jesus Christ and trust Him alone for salvation. You are the church.

The church is unlike any other group on earth. It is not a civic club or social organization, which means church doesn’t request “dues,” and has no qualifications for membership. Everyone can be part of the church, regardless of age (even babies), gender, ethnic background, economic status, or any other boundaries. You can simply be part of the church as you are because Jesus loves you. Jesus died for everyone who believed, believes, and will believe. In other words, if you love Jesus, and believe Him to be your Savior, that’s enough to be part of the church. So, let’s say to the next person, “You are the church.” Yes, you are the church, and we are the church.

Today's scripture describes church as "the body of Christ." Just as our physical bodies have several parts that function differently yet support one another, so too are we one body in Jesus Christ. If one member faces trouble, we all struggle together to find a solution. If someone is weak, the stronger members may assist. When one experiences joy, we all rejoice together. Within this body, some may work harder than others, like hands or feet; some may work as the brain, envisioning and planning; others may act as eyes or ears; and some as the mouth. However, whatever role you fulfill, it is essential to be mindful of glorifying Jesus Christ and carrying out His work, recognizing that you are a part of the body of Christ. Our physical bodies are not made of all ears without arms, or only eyes without legs. Similarly, the church, as the body of Christ is composed of individual persons with diverse gifts and abilities.

Many things happen when the body of Christ gathers because we are all different, bringing diverse knowledge and experiences. Therefore, we open our hearts and minds to one another as we learn and study together in order to grow in faith and worship One God in the Lord Jesus Christ. Sometimes we laugh together; sometimes we cry together. This is what we call "fellowship."

"Fellowship" is a crucial part of church activities, particularly because people often move around in our society, making it easy to feel alone. Young people change schools or workplaces and move from place to place, leaving friends and families behind. Families often experience changes that lead to losing close relationships. Some individuals don't even know the names of their next-door neighbors, while others may feel unwelcome in their own homes.

Part of the church's purpose is to provide a space where people can develop loving, caring friendships with other believers in Jesus Christ. Among the resolutions we have for our church, there is a question: "What do you want our church to be?" Some of you answered, "A safe and comfortable space." Yes, it is more important to make the church a safe and comfortable space than simply increasing the number of church members.

Of course, I don't mean to say that increasing church membership is not important. It certainly is. To address this, the church—the people of God—must become a bridge between God and those who do not know Him. The purpose of the church includes worship, study, and fellowship. However, Jesus gave the church another reason for its existence.

Several weeks after his resurrection, Jesus was prepared to return to his heavenly Father. Just before he ascended into heaven in a cloud, he gave his disciples some final instructions. These words of Jesus, recorded in Matthew 28:19-20, are known as the "Great Commission" of the church: "Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

This is the mission Jesus gave to us. In other words, we are called to reach out to people, invite them to the church, study and learn together, and grow in faith to become disciples of Jesus Christ. In accordance with Jesus' commandment, we have crafted our church mission statement: "Let us make disciples for Jesus Christ of all generations with open hearts, open minds, and open the doors for the transformation of the world." We Particularly focus on all generations to make disciples for Jesus Christ, emphasizing our work in youth and children's ministry. We are a church that gathers together in the body of Christ, worships God and shares fellowship in the love of Jesus Christ, and cares for one another through the Holy Spirit.

Moreover, we see ourselves as a bridge between God and His people. To fulfill this, we engage in mission projects both locally and globally. If we fail to be a bridge between church and the community, the church risks losing its mission and purpose as given us by Jesus. Even though we may be a smaller church, we are committed to fulfilling our mission to the best of our ability. This is why the church exists. Let us always remember that we are the church, no matter what we do and where we go. Thanks be to God. Amen!