

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION Unison**
For life-sustaining gifts that we so often take for granted-for shelter, food, and meaningful tasks to do; for your steadfast love that awakens us and raises us from our sinful ways; for your word that guides and heals us-we give you thanks, gracious God. As we invest a part of all you entrust to us to further the ministries of the church, may we show to others the immeasurable riches of your grace in Jesus Christ. Make this church a beacon of hope for the world. Amen.

We Go Forth to Love God and Serve One Another

***CLOSING HYMN** *Thy Word Is a Lamp* **UMH 601**

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

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



Upper St. Croix Parish United Methodist Church

The 2024 Parish Ministry Theme:
“Let’s Replant It” (Galatians 6:7-10)

Membership Caring Month
4th Sunday in Lent/ UMCOR 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
March 10th, 2024
**Membership Caring Month/
4th Sunday in Lent/UMCOR 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”

We Celebrate New Life in Christ

***CALL TO WORSHIP** Responsive
Light has entered our world; rejoice!
Light is God’s gift to each, and to all together.
Give thanks to God for days of watchful care.
The steadfast love of God endures forever.
Let those whom God has redeemed rejoice!
Let them tell the world of God’s good news!
We will thank God for wonderful works.
We will rejoice in God’s love for all humankind.
By God’s word, we are delivered from destruction.
By God’s mercy, we are healed and made whole.
Our voices will join in songs of joy.
Our lives will offer sacrifices of thanksgiving. Amen.

***DEDICATING HYMN** *Wonderful Words of Life*
UMH 600 (vs. 1 & 2)

OPENING PRAYER Unison
God of infinite patience, we call on you once more, knowing that you have every reason to question our coming together. We have worshiped without expectation. We have gathered without diligent preparation, as if meeting you laid no requirements on us. Amid the complexities of our lives, we have forgotten to set aside times to be still before you. Sometimes we feel as if we are bitten by snakes all week long, so we assemble here for some relief and healing. O God, will you meet us as we are? Amen.

CHILDREN’S TIME

UMH 191 (vs. 1)

Proclamation of God’s Word

***THE NEW TESTAMENT LESSON** **2 Timothy 3:14-17**
14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it 15 and how from childhood you have known sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 so that the person of God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.

This is the word of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

SERMON *“The People of the Bible”* **Pastor Jenny Lee**

We Respond to God’s Word

RESPONDING PRAYER Unison
Loving God, who sent Jesus to earth to share our common lot and bring eternal life into our midst, help us to believe and to trust. Show us the light of your revelation through your Word and help us to welcome its presence in the life of this congregation as we gather and when we scatter to our daily activities. May we consciously represent you in all our deeds so that the world may come to a saving knowledge of your grace. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

After each prayer request:
Pastor: Lord, in your mercy (Grace),
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**

MARCH CHURCH MISSIONS



ATLAS

Mission committee chair: Ashleigh Olson

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| <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

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| <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

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|  <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 | 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 |



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/Fourth Sunday in Lent/ UMCOR Sunday
God bless you!

Worship Service Schedule

- 3/10: 9:00 am Grantsburg with Zoom (9:15 am, Sunday School)
10:00 am Atlas (10:15 am, Sunday School)
11:15 am St. Croix Falls with Zoom
- 3/12: 6:30 pm, Ad Council meeting (G)
- 3/13-14: Pastor Jenny attends Ordination Retreat at Lake Lucerne
- 3/13: 1:00 pm, UMW Meeting (G)
5:00-8:00 pm, Junior Youth Gathering (G)
- 3/16: 4:00 pm, Katie's Wedding Rehearsal (SCF)
- 3/17: 2:00 pm, Katie's Wedding (SCF)

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

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|--------------------------|------|
| Colleen Adams-Schween | 3/10 |
| Dorothy Miller | 3/11 |
| Wren Rae Grimes | 3/12 |
| Peter & Kayleen Branstad | 3/14 |
| Barry Norenberg | 3/16 |



Next Sunday (March 17th)

VOLUNTEERS

Central -Grantsburg

| | |
|------------|----------------------------------|
| Pianist | Toni Koons |
| Liturgist | <i>Volunteer Needed</i> |
| Acolyte(s) | Willow Nyland |
| Fellowship | <i>Volunteer Needed</i> |
| Counter | <i>Volunteer Needed</i> |
| Cleaning | Sandra Erickson & Charlie Glonek |

Atlas

| | |
|---------------|-------------------------|
| Pianist | Sharon Asp |
| Liturgist | Sue Olson |
| Usher | Cheryl Olson |
| Cleaning | <i>Volunteer Needed</i> |
| Sunday School | Colleen Adams-Schween |

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, 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 10th, 2024
2 Timothy 3:14-17

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



“The People of the Bible” (Membership Caring Month #2)

I want to start with something funny that I found on an internet site: Sam shows up at a revival meeting, seeking help. “I need you to pray for my hearing,” he tells the preacher. The preacher puts his fingers on Sam’s ears and prays and prays. When he’s done, he asks, “How’s your hearing now?” “I don’t know,” says Sam. “I don’t go to court till next Tuesday.”

Sometimes we miscommunicate because of cultural differences, paradoxical idioms, different accents, or different meanings of a word we use, like in that funny story. I know some of you still have difficulties understanding my accent. I appreciate all your comments that responded to the question, “What do you expect from me as your pastor?” in my Resolution List in 2024. Some comments made me confident in continuing my pastoral and leadership ways; some comments challenged me to grow. All your comments are helpful to me, whether they challenge me or give me confidence. My purpose in asking the question is to listen to your honest voices in order to develop our relationship in Jesus Christ.

It was not the first time I asked, “what do you expect from me as your pastor.” When I first arrived here at Upper St. Croix Parish, I asked the church leaders about their expectations for me as the new pastor. Their expectations can be summarized as follows:

1. Provide a sermon manuscript for those with hearing aids.
2. Visit homebound members, as well as those in nursing homes or hospitals.
3. Managing a Facebook presence to connect the three churches in the Parish.
4. Avoid preaching on political issues and expressing personal political opinions.
5. Expand ministry efforts to include youth and children due to the aging population in the parish, currently consisting mostly of senior members.

I held their concerns and expectations in my prayers, intending to incorporate them into my ministry thus far. Now I want to listen to all of you— not only committee members, but all of our congregants—because I want to move forward with you together. Again, I appreciate all your comments.

As we observe March as “Membership Caring Month,” today, for the second session of my sermon series, I want to talk about “the People of the Bible.” When did you first read the Bible, and why do you continue to read it? As Christians, reading the Bible is very significant because it guides us on the way of salvation. Galatians 3:25 says, “The law (the Scripture) was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith.”

When I was in a hospital due to a broken spine, I began to seriously consider the Book of the Bible for the first time. In the midst of my hopelessness, a pastor and his wife, who my mother attends the church with, visited me in the hospital. After praying for me, the pastor’s wife said, “Sister, please read the Book of the Bible. Then, God will heal you, and you may walk again.” At that time, my doctor had told me, “I wouldn’t be able to walk again.” However, the pastor’s wife assured me, handing me her Bible, “If you read the Book of Bible, you can walk again.” If you were in my shoes, what would you have done? I threw the Bible away after they left my hospital room because I felt they cursed me, saying I wouldn’t walk again.

Recalling that time, if I were there again, I might have read it, hoping I could walk again even though I didn’t know about God. However, I realized this much later: The Bible is a blessing to the believers, but a curse

to unbelievers because the believers see salvation through both Christ's death and resurrection, while unbelievers see only punishment through Christ's death. My foolishness took me longer to recognize how important the Bible is to start my faith journey.

One day, another pastor visited me and prayed for me. I felt a strange warmth in my heart, which reminded me of what the previous pastor's wife had said, "Sister, please read the Book of the Bible, then God may heal you so you can walk again." So, I began reading the Bible. Eventually, I was able to walk again. You know, I don't believe that the Bible itself is a miraculous book, but I do believe that it guided me to Christ, who is the way of the salvation. In other words, the Bible guided me to grow my faith in God.

Today's scripture says, "how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus." Yes, the scripture is able to instruct us for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus because "all scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work."

Since I began my faith journey, I have faced many challenges. The first one was when I planted a new church after graduating from a seminary. On the day we had a celebratory service for the new church planting, my father passed away that night. My father had been ill and couldn't attend the service. But he used to say, "I will be a custodian when you plant a new church." Then, my mother returned home after attending the service and said to my father, "Honey, your daughter started a new church today. So, you should get up and be a custodian at her church as you said." It was then that my father passed away during the night.

I was disappointed because I believed that God might heal my father when I started the new church since he used to say, "I will be a custodian at your church." I was confused in my faith, wondering if it was the right way to continue my ministry. However, my mother advised me, "Your father has gone to his eternal home that Jesus prepared for him. He will be a custodian at your ministry wherever you go." My mother encouraged me to keep going with my ministry and supported me in many ways with her prayers.

On the fifth year of my ministry, my mother had a stroke and was hospitalized. Before she passed away, she left me with her last wish, "Go to America, study more and become a pastor there." Why? Why did this happen to me? As soon as I was released from hospital, I went to a seminary; after graduating, I planted a new church. What did I do wrong in the eyes of God? I was so disappointed with God, and it challenged my faith. I went to a prayer place on a mountaintop, fasting and wrestling with God and my faith.

Then, I began to read the Bible seriously, seeking to find God's will within its pages. After fasting for forty days, I came to realize that I died in Jesus Christ when I was in the hospital, but I had not yet been reborn in my faith journey. So, I began to question God, asking "why?" I prayed that I would die and join my mother in the realm of grief. While reading the scripture, I discovered a secret in Galatians 2:20; the Apostle says, "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." Yes, I am born again in Him through the Word of God. I no longer belong to myself, but to Him.

Remember that when you lose your way in your faith journey, the Bible guides you to find the way. Psalm 119:105 says, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path." We are the people of the Bible, who follow the scripture's guidance. The scripture is the best GPS, which never lets us lose our way to the will of God in Jesus Christ. Keep reading the Bible always! It guides you all the time! Thanks be to God. Amen!