

RESPONDING PRAYER Unison

God of empty tombs and abundant surprises, who announces new life in the face of death, dry our tears of grief and calm the anguish of our losses as we listen for amazing good news. Help us to experience the risen Jesus Christ in our everyday lives. Be to us a living presence, that the story of Easter may become our story, and we can embody its hope for the whole world. 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

Special Music (G)

***DOXOLOGY**

UMH 95

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION Unison**

We consecrate all we have brought to share, that the message of today may spread through the streets and across the lands, beginning within these walls and bursting out for all the world to hear and observe. May the glad songs motivate practical ministries. As forgiven and forgiving people, we take new life into the marketplace, into our jobs and schools, into our social life and leisure hours. May all we offer express true thankfulness. Amen.

We Go Forth to Love God and Serve One Another

***CLOSING HYMN**

In the Garden

UMH 314 (vs. 1 & 2)

***BENEDICTION**

Pastor Jenny Lee

***POSTLUDE**

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

Worship resource "Led by Love" by Lavon Bayle

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

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

**Membership Caring Month
Easter 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 31st, 2024
Membership Caring Month/
Easter Sunday

*Please stand if you are able.

***PRELUDE**

Toni Koons, Peyton Smallwood and Barbara Loomis (G)
Sharon Asp (A & SCF)

*** OPENING HYMN** *Christ, the Lord Is Risen Today*

UMH 302 (vs. 1 & 3)

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASSING OF THE GREETINGS **Responsive**

Jesus Christ is risen!

Jesus Christ is risen. Hallelujah!

We Celebrate New Life in Christ

***CALL TO WORSHIP** **Responsive**

This is a great and joyous festival day.

Come to celebrate amazing good news.

We gather for worship in awe and wonder.

The tomb is empty; death is not the last word.

Sing songs of praise, for God is good.

God's steadfast love endures forever.

God has answered our prayers with salvation.

Jesus Christ is alive and we, too, shall live.

Open your hearts and minds to the risen Christ.

You are greeted by name and welcomed here.

This is the day that our God has made.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it. Amen.

***DEDICATING HYMN** *Christ Is Risen* **UMH 307 (vs. 1 & 2)**

OPENING PRAYER **Unison**

We greet the dawning brightness of this special day with hopes renewed. We have known grief and sorrow, loss and tears, fear and failure. Meet us here, living Christ, for we need this time of

resurrection. We need your healing presence. We need your word of greeting that welcomes us into the community of faith in spite of our doubts and faithlessness. You are the Great Teacher. We have come to learn from you. We want to be your disciples. Amen.

Sacrament of Holy Baptism (G)

Candidate: Samuel Charles Rebenleo Chute

(See insert)

Parents: Stan Chute and Donna Norman

Godparents: Charles Aaron Shellito, Wanda Hinrichs, and Lori Aronson

Representative: Dianne Shellito

Proclamation of God's Word

***THE GOSPEL LESSON**

John 20:1-18

20 Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. 2 So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." 3 Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. 4 The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. 5 He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. 6 Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, 7 and the cloth that had been on Jesus's head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. 8 Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed, 9 for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. 10 Then the disciples returned to their homes. 11 But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb, 12 and she saw two angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. 13 They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." 14 When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. 15 Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." 16 Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher). 17 Jesus said to her, "Do not touch me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" 18 Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord," and she told them that he had said these things to her.

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

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

"The Miracle of Miracles"

Pastor Jenny Lee

APRIL CHURCH MISSIONS

ATLAS

Mission committee chair: Ashleigh Olson

INK JET RECYCLING PROGRAM:

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



LOAVES & FISHES NEEDS OUR ONGOING SUPPORT

Requested items: cooking oil (smaller and larger), mayonnaise, sugar 4# size, bar soap, dish and laundry soap. Personal products for men and women.



We will be collecting supplies to stock the church! Here is a list of suggested items. You can also reference the bulletin board or newsletter! Thank you!
ITEMS: Toilet Bowl Cleaner, Air Freshener Spray, Toilet Paper, Paper Towels, Tall Kitchen Bags, Gallon Twist-Tie Bags, Pine-Sol, Cleanser, Dish Soap

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

We will be collecting supplies to stock the church. Please see the bulletin board or newsletter for more details. Thank you!
ITEMS NEEDED: D-Cell Batteries, Toilet Cleaner, Gallon Zipper Baggies, Paper Dinner Plates-Dixie Ultra Preferred, Paper Dessert Plates-Dixie Ultra Preferred, Plastic Forks (Forks Only!), Napkins, Bleach (1 Gallon Only), Oven Cleaner (Spray Can), Coffee Creamer Singles (200 max.), Kool-Aid Premix Containers (or Similar), Crystal Light, Juice Boxes (or Similar), Distilled Water, Liquid Hand Soap Individuals or Refills, Hand Sanitizer Individuals or Refills, Type CC Vacuum Cleaner Bags



ST. CROIX FALLS

Mission committee chair: Kate Murtaugh



Food Shelf
(Communion Sunday)



Sailor Hat Offering:

The Sailor Hat offering will go to support UMCOR!

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	Volunteer Needed
Counter	Volunteer Needed
Cleaning	Sandra Erickson & Charlie Glonek
Easter Brunch	All Together



Atlas

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



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/Easter Sunday!
Christ is risen for you!

Worship Service Schedule

- 3/31: 9:00 am Grantsburg with Zoom (9:15 am, Sunday School)
Baptismal service
10:00 am Atlas (10:15 am, Sunday School)
11:15 am St. Croix Falls with Zoom
- 3/31: 2:00 pm Pastor Jenny leads C.C. C. worship
4/1-4/15: Pastor Jenny's Vacation
Pupil Supply: 4/7, Barbara Loomis (All 3 churches)
4/14, Sharon Asp (G & A)
Kathy Gionis (SCF)
- 4/3: 6:30-8:00 pm Senior 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!

The Week's Birthdays

Emma Rahkola 3/31
Willow Nyland 4/6



Next Sunday (April 7th)

VOLUNTEERS

Central -Grantsburg

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

VOLUNTEERS
MAKE A DIFFERENCE
SIGN UP TODAY!

Atlas

Preach	Barbara Loomis
Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Sue Olson
Usher	Cheryl Olson
Cleaning	Volunteer Needed
Sunday School	Colleen Adams-Schween

St. Croix Falls

Preach	Barbara Loomis
Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Kathy Gionis
Usher(s)	Jim Andrews
Money Counter	Peter Gionis
Bell Ringer	Jim Sciacca
Flowers	Lynn Hanson

Upcoming Events-Mark Your Calendar

- April 1-15 Pastor Jenny's Vacation
- April 19-21 Youth Retreat, at Wood Lake Camp
(Contact their Youth Director)
- April 21 Communion Sunday/Lenten Bible Study Recognition
- April 27 UMW Spring Sale (G)
- August 6-8 2024 VBS

Sharing of a Life



**Anyone wants to share your plants or seeds,
bring them to the table “Sharing Station.”
And, anyone who wants them, help yourself!
*We will continue sharing through Pentecost!***

Sharing of a Life



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bring them to the table “Sharing Station.”
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“The Miracle of the Miracles”

I want to start with something funny that I found on an internet site: Three blondes died and met St. Peter at the Pearly Gates of Heaven. St. Peter tells them they can enter the gates if they can answer a simple question. St. Peter asks the first blonde, “What is Easter?” The blonde replies, “Oh, that’s easy! It’s the holiday in November when everyone gets together, eats turkey, and is thankful and stuff...” “Wrong!” replies St. Peter, and asks the second blonde the same question, “What is Easter?” The second one replies, “Easter is the holiday in December when we put up a nice tree, exchange presents, and drink eggnog.” St. Peter looks at the second one, shakes his head in disgust, tells her she’s wrong, and then peers over his glasses at the third blonde and asks, “What is Easter?”

The third blonde smiled confidently and looked St. Peter in the eyes, “I know what Easter is.” “Oh?” says St. Peter. “Easter is the Christian holiday that coincides with the Jewish celebration of Passover. Jesus and his disciples were eating at the Last Supper. Then the Romans took him to be crucified, and he was stabbed in the side, made to wear a crown of thorns, and hung on a cross with nails through his hands. He was buried in a nearby cave, which was sealed off by a large boulder.” St. Peter smiles broadly with delight. Then the third blonde continues, “Every year, the boulder is moved aside so that Jesus can come out... and, if he sees his shadow, there will be six more weeks of winter.

I ask you, “What is Easter?” Don’t worry; it is not an examination question that you have to pass to enter heaven or not. I wonder, what Easter means for you. What comes to mind first when you hear “Easter”? Some of you might remember the sunrise services of Easter and fellowship afterward. Some of you remember beautiful lilies and decorations on the altar, along with wonderful choir songs. Some of you might think that Easter is the same every year. A few years ago, I overheard one of the community members say, “The service was good, but the sermon was just the same old Easter crap.”

Every Easter sermon has the same theme, “Christ is risen.” Perhaps you have heard sermons with the same theme every Easter Sunday. However, I wonder if the good news of Christ’s resurrection is not enough for you. Christ’s resurrection is the miracle of miracles. There was none greater, and there will be none greater. The miracle was the work of God the Father, as the Scripture in Acts says, “Whom you crucified but whom God raised from dead” (Acts 4:10). If you still think that you hear the same sermon every Easter, I hope God gives you the grace to forget and experience anew every year.

I believe that we should remind ourselves of our sins and God’s saving grace throughout Easter. We crucify Jesus every moment in our everyday lives when we feel discouraged, disappointed, full of despair, and complain or become upset about our lives. But God raises Him again on Easter morning to give us hope, lift us up, awaken us, and encourage us so that we can move forward. The entire Christian faith stands or falls on the reality of the resurrection. Christianity is the only religion to proclaim the resurrection. Without the resurrection, there is no faith, no Gospel, no proclamation, no worship, no mission, and no hope left in Christendom.

We keep our faith in God because our Lord Jesus Christ has risen. Because of His resurrection, the cross was not a symbol of shameful death, but an atonement for the world’s sins. “God was in

Christ reconciling the world unto himself” (2 Corinthians 5:19). Because He lives, we worship Him today, celebrating His resurrection. Each Sunday, the church observes the miracle of the resurrection. Do you know why we gather on Sundays to worship God? It is because His resurrection was on a Sunday. Since then, Christians have called Sunday the Lord’s Day and worshiped God to celebrate His resurrection. That’s Sunday worship. Because he rose and ascended to His Father, we have the Holy Spirit and look forward to His return for the ultimate victory over the world. In the light of the resurrection, we live with the assurance that life is stronger than death, love greater than hate, and there is more goodness than evil. By his resurrection, Jesus conquered humanity’s last and greatest enemy, death. Furthermore, Christ’s resurrection is an assurance of what Jesus taught us and promised us. Because of His resurrection, we have hope for eternal life.

More than 2000 years ago, Mary Magdalene was an outcast of Israelite society, a woman with physical and emotional illnesses. She had no friends or family by her side as everyone ignored and abandoned her due to her emotional condition. However, only Jesus extended his hands to her and treated her as a fellow human being. Through the love of Jesus and the grace of God, Mary Magdalene finally found healing and became one of Jesus’ disciples. She was the first person to encounter the risen Christ.

The disciples, who went to the tomb along with Mary Magdalene discovered it was empty. They then returned home. This raised the question: how could the disciples simply return home after witnessing the empty tomb, especially without realizing the significance of Jesus’ resurrection? Even though they spent three years with Jesus and learned about his death and resurrection, they may have forgotten what they were taught, or allowed fear to scatter them following Jesus’ crucifixion.

However, Mary Magdalene was shocked to find the body of Jesus gone. She wasn’t able to leave without knowing where Jesus was and she wept outside the tomb. Finally, Jesus appeared to her and said, “Mary, why are you crying? Go and tell others, ‘I am resurrected.’” It is the miracle of miracles that she encountered the risen Christ and became the first witness to Jesus’ resurrection.

Today, it’s no wonder the risen Christ is here with us. If you believe that Jesus died and rose for you, that is the miracle of miracles because Jesus chose you just as He chose Mary Magdalene 2000 years ago. The risen Christ is among us. No wonder we are urged to witness Jesus’ resurrection. No matter what challenges you’ve faced — whether you have battled an illness, or struggled with depression or addiction — go and share your experiences with others who are facing similar struggles. Go and tell them, “Christ is risen for you.” Remember, God loves you deeply, whether you are in trouble or experiencing joy. As long as you believe in the risen Christ, His is by your side as your healer, supporter, and savior. Remember, Jesus died for you and rose again for you! Thanks be to God. Amen.