

THE LORD'S PRAYER
INVITATION/PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND
OFFERINGS

*DOXOLOGY

UMH 95

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION Unison

We give with joy, gracious God, for you have been with us even when we were unfaithful. You have kept us safe through times of grave distress. We can call on you in all times and places, in life and in death, knowing that your strength is available to sustain us. We give now that your church may be empowered in the proclamation of good news and the transformation of human life. Amen.

We Go Forth to Love God and Serve One Another

*CLOSING HYMN

Easter People, Raise Your Voices

UMH 304 (vs. 1 & 2)

*BENEDICTION Responsive

Put your trust in God as you face another week.
God affirms you and claims your faithfulness.

We will open our eyes to the goodness of God.

We seek to follow faithfully where Christ leads.

We have been touched by mystery and wonder.
Let us live as God's beloved children.

What we will become has not yet been revealed.

We are confident in God's will for us. Amen.

*POSTLUDE

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

Worship resource "led by Love" by Lavon Bayle

NO. 2024-15
April 14th, 2024



Upper St. Croix Parish United Methodist Church

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

Third Sunday of Easter



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

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
April 14th, 2024
Third Sunday of Easter

*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!
(Wave your hand!)

We Celebrate New Life in Christ

***CALL TO WORSHIP** Responsive

God has set apart those who are faithful.
Our Creator will hear us when we call.

God puts gladness in our hearts and minds.

We will lie down in safety and sleep in peace.

Beloved, we are God's children now.

What we will be has not yet been revealed.

We are here to remember Jesus Christ.

We want to be like the One who lived by love.

Our faith strengthens us for each day's living.

God empowers our ministries of caring.

We trust God whose children we are.

We look forward to what God will reveal to us. Amen.

***DEDICATING HYMN** *Thine Be the Glory*

UMH 308 (vs. 1 & 3)

OPENING PRAYER Unison

God of our ancestors, author of life, source of Easter good news, we are drawn together again by the mystery of life and death. we call on you, so far beyond our knowing, with a mixture of faith and doubt. Let your face shine on us as we put our trust in you. Draw together the fragments of our busy lives around the central core of love which you provide, that we might relate to one another as whole people. Grant us a fuller sense of what is right and good, and help us to live at our best. Amen.

CHILDREN'S TIME

UMH 191 (vs. 1)

Proclamation of God's Word

***THE GOSPEL LESSON**

1 Thessalonians 5:3-8

3 When they say, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! 4 But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; 5 for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. 6 So, then, let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober, 7 for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. 8 But since we belong to the day, let us be sober and put on the breastplate of faith and love and for a helmet the hope of salvation.

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

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

Sharon Asp (G & A)
Kathy Gionis (SCF)

We Respond to God's Word

RESPONDING PRAYER Unison

God of amazing surprises, whose proclamation of peace through the risen Christ startles us yet washes over us with refreshing joy, we are eager to see Jesus and to trust that the purity of life we know through him is worth emulating. Put us in touch with trust that cleanses and makes whole so we can relate to others in ways that reconcile and redeem. 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!

APRIL CHURCH MISSIONS

TODAY'S SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

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>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!</p> <p>ITEMS: Toilet Bowl Cleaner, Air Freshener Spray, Toilet Paper, Paper Towels, Tall Kitchen Bags, Gallon Twist-Tie Bags, Pine-Sol, Cleanser, Dish Soap</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>APRIL SHOWERS</p> <p>We will be collecting supplies to stock the church. Please see the bulletin board or newsletter for more details. Thank you!</p> <p><i>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</i></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 UMCOR!</i></p> 
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Ministers

All God's People

Central -Grantsburg

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

Atlas

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

St. Croix Falls

Preach	Kathy Gionis
Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Karen Sciacca
Usher(s)	Jim Andrews
Money Counter	Peter Gionis
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!

Thank you for your support!

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

- 4/14: 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
- 4:16: 10:30 am-1pm Pastor Jenny Volunteers at Loaves & Fish in Luck
6:30 pm Ad Council Meeting (G)
- 4/17: 6:30-8:00 pm Senior Youth Gathering (G)
- 4/19-4/21: Junior Youth Retreat at Wood Lake Camp
- 4:21: Communion Sunday
12:15 pm Ad Council Meeting (SCF)
2:00 pm Pastor Jenny Leads CCC Worship

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

Olivia McNally 4/14
Toni Koons 4/16
Judy Lien 4/16
Allison Reid 4/17

Happy Birthday!

Next Sunday (April 21st)

VOLUNTEERS

Central -Grantsburg

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

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	Kathy Gionis
Usher(s)	Jim Andrews
Money Counter	Peter Gionis
Bell Ringer	Jim Sciacca
Flowers	Lynn Hanson

Upcoming Events-Mark Your Calendar

- 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)
- April 29 Youth Fun Day (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!



SPRING BOUTIQUE SALE & LUNCH



Saturday, April 27th, 2024 ~ 9:00 am-1:00 pm

Central UMC, 301 S Pine St., Grantsburg

Come and Shop our Crafts & Quality Used Items and join
us for lunch where we will be serving Sloppy Joes, salads
and dessert bars! You won't want to miss the great deals
and delicious food! We hope to see you there!



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

Third Sunday of Easter

Kathy Gionis

Today is the Third Sunday of Easter and although the author of today's scripture reading never identified himself, Christians since the beginning of the church have considered this letter to be written by John, the apostle. (Thus the name First John.) Earlier in chapter 1, the author clearly places himself as part of a group of eyewitnesses to the life and ministry of Jesus writing that "what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also". This is an epistle, or letter, written by John while thought to be in Patmos, written to, most likely, young Christian congregations showing his support and encouragement to them in these first century Christian churches.

This particular reading starts out, "See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called the children of God and that is what we are." It is an amazing statement, "See what love!" and "That we should be called the children of God". At the end of the text he addresses the readers as "Little children" not referring to actually "little children" or "toddlers", but to the young Christian churches.

The scripture is straight forward in a black and white description of instruction to do what is right—"Everyone who does what is right is righteous," and stressing the difference between right and wrong. The reading urges us to be like Christ or like God. The problem is that we are human and prone to sinful acts and thoughts.

Many years ago I was representing a young mother who was probably going to be losing custody of her children because of her poor choices regarding the upbringing of the children. Somehow her testimony had gotten around to the topic of her affiliation with the church. The Judge asked her straight-out, "Are you a good Christian?" She took a few seconds and then responded, "I'm working on it." There is a cliché that goes, "God is not done with me yet". But it is also a truth that we can grab hold of, and seek to purify ourselves as it says in verse 3 of today's reading, just as God is pure. In our church community we can share this process by encouraging each other and building up each other. As a church, we are a body of believers striving to be more Christ-like or God-like.

This particular text is somewhat puzzling because of the use of the pronoun "him". Is the author referring to God or to Jesus. Sometimes it seems clear he is talking about Jesus, and other times it seems like he is talking about God. Maybe it is interchangeable. Authorities believe that 1 John was written around 90 A.D., almost 2000 years ago, and so what may have been understood back then is not so easy to discern now.

There is another book of the New Testament which seems to be a good companion to 1 John, and that is Galatians written by Paul, and particularly Galatians 5:22 regarding the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Wherein John defines righteousness and purity, Paul gives a roadmap of how to get there. Paul sees the virtues of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control as a counterbalance for vices that John warns against and sets forth the nine attributes of a person or community living in accord with the Holy spirit.

This first description of “love” is one that we have all heard at weddings, although Paul used it in Corinthians to describe the unconditional love that God has for the world and that Christians have for each other. “Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hope, always perseveres. Love never fails.”

Joy in God is characterized as deeper than mere happiness, rooted in God and coming from him.

Peace is used in Christianity to describe one believing they have achieved salvation. It can be described as a state of wholeness and order as opposed to chaos. Bringing one’s worries, fears and concerns to God in Prayer.

Patience. There are a lot of words that would fit a description of patience, but one description would be continuing to bear up under difficult circumstances, with a hope that resists defeat. Endurance, longsuffering and perseverance are other descriptors.

Kindness is acting for the good of people without expecting anything in return. It could be adapting to the needs of others around you rather than requiring others to adapt to your needs.

Goodness and kindness are similar, but goodness goes a little further and can be described as “virtue” or moral excellence.

Faithfulness. In the Bible it is used to describe both the “trustworthy” and those believing in God and Jesus Christ.

Gentleness. The New Spirit Life Bible describes it as “a disposition that is even-tempered, tranquil, balanced in spirit, unpretentious, and that has the passions under control.”

Self-control. Strength in self control and in mastering one's thoughts and behaviors.

The "fruit" of the Holy Spirit is the product of the Holy Spirit, not of the individual Christian. Like any other gardener, the fruit must be cared for and weeds will need to be gotten rid of, like in any garden. Looking at all these "fruits of the Holy Spirit" seems daunting. But, Paul's description of what a Christian life should look like gives us something to strive for.