

We Respond to God's Word

NO. 2024-21
May 26th, 2024

RESPONDING PRAYER Unison

Wind of God, blowing among the crowds at Pentecost, sweeping across the generations to claim us, may we be born of the Spirit. Speak to us of heavenly things in the midst of our earthly pilgrimage so we may live, not for ourselves, but for the well-being of the whole human family. Send us as messengers of good news and bearers of your peace. We pray in Jesus' name. 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!

THE LORD'S PRAYER

INVITATION/PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

***DOXOLOGY**

UMH 95

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION Unison**

Receiving our offering, God of glory, that our church may come alive in the Spirit. May these gifts, and the way we live our lives each day, proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. Strengthen us in our giving. Help us to be generous enough to experience the joy you find in showering us with more than we can ever give away. Thank you for the gift of Jesus Christ. Amen!

We Go Forth to Love God and Serve One Another

***CLOSING HYMN**

Gather Us In

TFWS 2236 (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)

Trinity Sunday / Peace with Justice Sunday



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-Summer Break)

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
May 26th, 2024
Trinity Sunday / Peace with Justice 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”

(Waive your hands at one another)

We Celebrate New Life in Christ

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

Ascribe to God glory and strength;

Worship God in holy splendor.

The splendor of our Creator meets us here.

We are Filled with awe before our God.

The voice of God is powerful and full of majesty.

God offers strength and peace to all people.

God’s voice thunders over the waters.

God’s strength empowers our response.

Holy, holy, holy is the God of hosts.

The whole earth is full of God’s glory.

The universe is God’s dwelling place.

There is no place from which God is absent. Amen.

***DEDICATING HYMN** *Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty*

UMH 64 (Vs. 1 & 4)

OPENING PRAYER **Unison**

O God, you are beyond our wildest imagination. When we speak of you, there are no words to describe your majesty and power. We know you best in Jesus of Nazareth who shared your love with all he met. He called for our rebirth as your children, cleansed by water and the Spirit. We come together seeking renewal of the vows made at our baptism. We want to be faithful as Christ was faithful. We want to be fruitful in the work you give us to do. Bless our worship so that we may be a blessing to others. Amen!

CHILDREN’S TIME (G)

UMH 191 (vs. 1)

Proclamation of God’s Word

***THE NEW GOSPEL LESSON**

John 3:1-17

3 Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. 2 He came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with that person.” 3 Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” 4 Nicodemus said to him, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?” 5 Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. 6 What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ 8 The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” 9 Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” 10 Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?”

11 “Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen, yet you do not receive our testimony. 12 If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? 13 No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. 14 And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

16 “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

17 “Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him.

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

Thanks be to God. Amen!

SERMON

“Born of the Spirit”

Pastor Jenny Lee

MAY 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><u>Community Referral Agency (CRA)</u></p> <p><i>In May we will support CRA in Milltown. They provide shelter and services for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.</i></p> <p><i>They are specifically in need of condiments, sugar, batteries and refill cleaning pads for their Swiffer. There is a general list of items they are looking for in the May newsletter and on the bulletin board at church.</i></p> <p><i>Please note that items should be new or in good to very good condition.</i></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><u>Global Mission Secondary School in Tanzania</u></p> <p><i>In May we will be collecting Donations for Yung Seon (Christine) Kim in Tanzania. We sent money to support the building of the Global Mission Secondary School in 2020 and our donations will go to help support this school.</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 The St. Croix Food Shelf!</i></p> 
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Ministers

All God's People

Central -Grantsburg

Pianist	Toni Koons
Liturgist	Barbara Loomis
Acolyte(s)	Willow Nyland
Fellowship	Volunteer Needed
Counter	Volunteer Needed
Cleaning	Sandra Erickson
Mowing	Dave Huff
Sunday School	Jenni Stedman

Atlas

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

St. Croix Falls

Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Karen Sciacca
Usher(s)	Kathy Gionis
Money Counter	Peter Gionis
Bell Ringer	Jim Sciacca
Communion	Jim and Karen Sciacca
Flowers	Kathy Gionis



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 10:30 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=SDZleFNubmEvaDBlcytTRzVxMFllZz09>
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: Trinity Sunday; Peace with Justice Sunday
We encourage you to make a special offering to support UMCOR's "Peace with Justice" ministry. This donation goes to support the special ministry for marginal people and those in need through UMCOR. Please note your check should be payable to our individual church and put a note in the memo that it is for UMCOR or Peace with Justice. We'll collect everything and send one check to UMCOR. Your generous gift will save many lives! God Bless you all!

Worship Service Schedule

- 5/26: 9:00 am Grantsburg with Zoom (9:15 am, Sunday School)
10:00 am Atlas (No Sunday School-Summer Break)
11:15 am St. Croix Falls
- 5/27: Memorial Day
- 5/28-5/30: Pastor Jenny attending Retirement Service and Clergy Session at Stevens Point
- 5/29: 12-1:00 pm Shepherd Team Meeting at Stevens Point
- 5/30: 6:30-8:00 pm Senior Youth Gathering
- 6/1: Big Gust Day (G)
6:00 pm VBS Plan Team Meeting

Next Sunday (June 2nd):

Joint Service : Homecoming Sunday
Celebrating SCF's 165th Anniversary

VOLUNTEERS

St. Croix Falls

Pianist	Sharon Asp
Preach	DS Rev. Peace Kim
Liturgist	Pastor Jenny Lee
Usher(s)	Kathy Gionis
Money Counter	Peter Gionis
Bell Ringer	Jim Sciacca
Flowers	Kathy Gionis
Communion	Karen & Jim Sciacca



Upcoming Events & News-Mark Your Calendar

- 6/2 **Joint Worship Service at St. Croix Falls UMC (10:30 am) Homecoming Sunday! Let's celebrate SCF's 165th Anniversary!**
Our new DS will be attending and participating by preaching at the service. Come and join us, and if you have any questions regarding Methodism, you may ask him! Lunch will be provided and there will also be gifts, and door prizes!
- 6/7-6/10 **Annual Conference & Pastor's Ordination**
Pastor Jenny and our parish delegates (Sue Olson and Barbara Loomis) will attend. Please pray for them.
- 8/4-8/8 **2024 VBS (except 8/6)** (We received a grant of \$1,000)
Donations and volunteer signup sheets are posted.
We can make VBS happen together!

This Week's Birthdays & Anniversaries

Link Loomis 5/28
Dave Huff 5/30
Colleen & Barry Norenberg 5/31





“Born of the Spirit”

I want to start with something funny that I found on an internet site: A Jewish grandmother is at the beach with her 10-year-old Jewish grandson. She’s chilling while he’s playing in the water. Suddenly, a huge wave comes and takes the child away with it. The grandmother is obviously in tears and starts speaking to God. “It’s been more than 70 years since I started worshipping you, God. I’ve raised three generations – my siblings, children, and grandchildren, according to Jewish religion and tradition. I prayed daily, only ate kosher food, did the sabbath and everything else required by you for my whole life. How could you let this happen? How could you let my grandson die at such a young age?”

A few seconds later, a huge godly wave, with the child on top, comes in and the grandson lands safely on the sand. The grandmother can’t believe her eyes: : “Thank you Lord, thank you, thank you, thank you.” As she looks towards the sky, and says, “I don’t want to push my luck, but he had a brand-new baseball cap.”

Have you ever experienced God’s answers to your prayers? When you received His answers, how did you feel? Did you feel it was like a miracle, or did it just seem like it was supposed to happen? We have learned that Jesus performed many miracles, such as healing the sick, feeding five thousand people with five loaves of bread and two fish, raising the dead, and turning water into wine, among countless other things. However, why don't we see any miracles nowadays? Is it because Jesus is gone? Is it due to our lack of faith? Or is it because God doesn't love us? Why? Why can't we see God's miracles any longer? Have you ever thought about it?

One day while I was meditating, I suddenly realized that God might still work for us in miraculous ways, but we may not realize it because our hearts are hardened, or blocked by our many worries and anxieties about worldly things. The Letter of Romans says, “There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God.” I think that we may not be seeking God’s miracles. If we do not seek them, we either do not believe in God, or do not believe in miracles.

When I was in the hospital, I didn’t believe in God. However, I sought miracles to heal my broken spine. Through my experiences, I believe that if you don’t believe in God, you can’t see God’s miracles. After I started believing in God, my eyes were opened to see His miracles. It was a miracle that I met a pastor who brought me the Good News of Jesus Christ. It was a miracle that I met the right doctor in the hospital who performed surgery on my spine. It was a miracle that I was born to my parents. It was a miracle that my mother’s wish and my wish came true: that I became a pastor in the USA. It is a miracle that I am here before you. There are countless miracles. Don’t you think so? Please count how many miracles of God appear around you. If you don’t intentionally count God’s grace, you might miss it. Every morning and evening, if you count God’s grace, you may notice more abundant grace pouring on you.

This morning, we turn our hearts and minds to the Gospel of John, 3:1-17. This passage includes one of the most profound and essential teaching of Jesus about new birth, the love of God, and the gift of eternal life. The passage begins with Nicodemus, a Pharisee and a ruler of the Jews, coming

to Jesus by night. Nicodemus is curious, respectful, and open-minded, seeking to understand more about Jesus and His teachings. Nicodemus feared that people might see him visiting Jesus. So, he visited Jesus at night. He believed that Jesus was from God because he performed many miracles.

Jesus responded to Nicodemus, saying, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again” (John 3:3). Nicodemus asks, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?” (v.4). Jesus explains that this new birth is not a physical rebirth but a spiritual one, saying, “Very truly tell you, no one enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit” (v. 5). This signifies a transformation brought by the Holy Spirit, a renewal that comes from above. The water symbolizes cleansing and repentance, and the Spirit symbolizes the life-giving power of God.

We might observe that some people work hard at church full of passion and enthusiasm. However, we should discern the difference between people's enthusiasm and the power of the Holy Spirit. After graduating from a seminary in Korea, I planted a new church with passion and enthusiasm. No one doubted my faith in God because I dedicated my heart, mind, and soul to the church ministry, investing my time, energy, material resources, and gifts. However, while I was ministering at the church, I lost my mother. At that time, I felt exhausted from the work, disappointed in God, and depressed. I couldn’t do anything, and my siblings took me to a place of prayer. I decided to seek God earnestly through fasting, feeling that I was going to die before God.

You may know, Elijah, who got a tremendous victory against Baal’s prophets, numbering four hundred fifty. After getting the victory on Mount Carmel, he ran away from Queen Jezebel, who supported the Baal prophets. Elijah went into wilderness, and sat under a broom tree, and prayed for death, “I have had enough, Lord. Take my life. I am no better than my ancestors.” And he lay down under the tree. However, God never abandoned him. Instead, he sent an angel to feed him and encouraged him so that he could move forward (1 Kings 18-19).

I experienced something similar to Elijah. After I graduated, I planted a new church and ran a preschool. The church ministry was flourishing until just before my mother passed away. I believed it was my own ability and the result of my work that the ministry was doing so well. That’s why I felt disappointed, exhausted, and depressed. The purpose of my fasting was to surrender completely before God. However, it led me to open my eyes and heart to see God’s love. I realized that without God’s help, I could do nothing. At that time, I died spiritually before God and experienced being born again in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit. Although I fasted for forty days planning to die, instead I was reborn through the experience. God works in miraculous ways, sometimes beyond our immediate understanding, but later you may have an “Aha moment.”

Remember that when Moses lifted the bronze serpent in the wilderness, those who were sickened by poisonous serpents looked at the bronze serpent with faith and were healed. Similarly, when we believe in Jesus, who was lifted up on the cross, our closed eyes, hardened hearts, and souls may be opened to see God’s love, His vision for us, His gifts, and eternal life. Recall that Jesus came into the world to save us through His love, not to condemn it. John 3:16 encapsulates the core of the Gospel: “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life” (John 3:16). As we reflect on this passage, we must ask ourselves: Have we experienced this new birth? Have we embraced the transformative power of the Holy Spirit in our lives? Let us open our hearts to the work of the Spirit, allowing Him to renew and transform us. Let us hold firmly to the truth of John 3:16, and let us go forth in the love and grace that Jesus came to bring. Thanks be to God. Amen!

HOMECOMING *Sunday*

St. Croix Falls United Methodist Church *165th Anniversary Homecoming Sunday Service*

June 2nd, 2024 at 10:30 AM
300 N Adams St.-Saint Croix Falls, WI

Special Speakers:

Northwest District Superintendent Rev. Peace Kim
Lead Pastor Rev. Jenny Lee, Ph.D.



Rev. Peace Kim



Rev. Jenny Lee



SCF Administrative Council

Light Lunch Following Service
Free Gift for Attending
Raffle Door Prize!

All are welcome!