

RESPONDING PRAYER Unison

The Holy One of God, sent to live among us in faithfulness to God's loving intention for all humanity, lead our journey toward the truth that is eternal. Be to us the bread of eternal life, a source of trust, a guard against misplaced loyalties and false assumptions, that we may live in harmony with all God's creation and relate to our brothers and sisters in ways that are pleasing to our Creator. Amen!

BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS, TEACHERS & ANIMALS

Please fill out the form for blessing your pets, and give it to Pastor Jenny.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

INVITATION/PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

***DOXOLOGY**

UMH 95

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION Unison**

May our giving add strength to the witness of your church as we humbly seek your truth and lovingly share it. Ready us to proclaim the gospel of peace in our homes, in our places of work and leisure, throughout our community and the world. Keep before your people the awesome mystery of faith. May its power overcome the cynicism of our skeptical, self-serving age, uniting us in disciplines that are freeing and discipleship that is amazingly fulfilling. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen!

We Go Forth to Love God and Serve One Another

***CLOSING HYMN** *God Be with You till We Meet Again*

UMH 672

***BENEDICTION**

Pastor Jenny Lee

***POSTLUDE**

Sharon Asp

Worship designed "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)

14th Sunday After Pentecost



Grantsburg-Central
Since 1897



Atlas
Since 1887



St. Croix Falls
Since 1859

Joint Outdoor Service:

*10:30 AM at Atlas Park
(Address: Next door to Atlas UMC
2108 295th Ave County Rd B, Luck)*

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
August 25th, 2024
14th Sunday After Pentecost

*Please stand if you are able.

***PRELUDE**

Sharon Asp

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS
PASSING OF THE GREETINGS**

“Peace be with you”

(Waive your hands at one another)

We Celebrate New Life in Christ

***MISSION STATEMENT Responsive**

Let us shout our mission statement together.

**Let us make the disciples of Jesus Christ all generations with
open hearts, open minds, and open doors for the
transformation of the world. Amen.**

***CALL TO WORSHIP Responsive**

With profound happiness, we welcome one another.

How good it is to approach the courts of our God!

Happy are those who live in God’s house!

Singing our praise to God fills us with joy.

Here we welcome both friends and strangers.

All people of the earth are God’s children.

We greet one another by name in Jesus’ name.

Together we extol the name of our God.

Open your hearts to receive new strength.

Open your lives to renewed understanding.

Surely God will equip us to face our world.

We will be ambassadors for God wherever we go. Amen.

***DEDICATING HYMN**

My Jesus, I Love Thee

UMH 172

OPENING PRAYER Unison

**We come together in this place, trusting you, O God, to give us
everything we need. As you provide for the birds of the air, you
supply life’s necessities for your children to share. We choose to
respond to your promises by identifying ourselves as your servant**

**people who seek to be guided by your word of life. We gather to
remember and reclaim your covenant with us. Fleeing from tents
of wickedness, we gather to do the tasks you entrust to us here,
praying for strength to do our daily work as a ministry in your
name. Amen!**

Proclamation of God’s Word

***THE GOSPEL LESSON**

John 6:56-69

56 Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me and I in them.
57 Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so
whoever eats me will live because of me. 58 This is the bread that came
down from heaven, not like that which the ancestors ate, and they died.
But the one who eats this bread will live forever.” 59 He said these things
while he was teaching in a synagogue at Capernaum.

60 When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This teaching is
difficult; who can accept it?” 61 But Jesus, being aware that his disciples
were complaining about it, said to them, “Does this offend you? 62 Then
what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before?
63 It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have
spoken to you are spirit and life. 64 But among you there are some who do
not believe.” For Jesus knew from the beginning who were the ones who
did not believe and who was the one who would betray him. 65 And he
said, “For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it
is granted by the Father.”

66 Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went
about with him. 67 So Jesus asked the twelve, “Do you also wish to go
away?” 68 Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom can we go? You
have the words of eternal life. 69 We have come to believe and know that
you are the Holy One of God.”

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

Thanks be to God. Amen!

SPECIAL MUSIC

Youth Band

SERMON

“Jesus, The Bread of Eternal Life”

Pastor Jenny Lee

AUGUST 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: eggs, milk, mayonnaise, coffee, tea, peanut butter, crackers, cookies. Personal Products for men & women.</p>	<p>LAUNDRY DETERGENT</p> <p>We will be collecting laundry detergent for Loaves & Fishes Food Shelf.</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>DISCRETIONARY FUND COLLECTION</p> <p>This month will be collecting financial donations for CUMC's discretionary fund. This fund is used by the pastor to assist individuals who reach out to the church for help. This can be money for gas, food or other essential needs. Thank you for your support!</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 Interfaith Caregivers!</i></p> 
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Thank you for your support!

TODAY'S SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

Ministers All God's People
Rev. Jenny Lee

VOLUNTEERS:

Joint Service at Atlas Park:
Blessing of the Backpacks, our Teachers and our Pets.

(Atlas church will provide lunch; please bring a lawn chair if you have one)

Atlas

Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Sue Olson
Usher	Colleen Adams-Schween
Cleaning	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Sunday School	Summer Break
Fellowship Meal	Atlas Church



Breakthrough Prayers:

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



REMINDER: SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER AND CALENDAR INFORMATION SHOULD BE EMAILED TO COLLEEN NORENBURG BY TUESDAY, AUGUST 27. THE SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER WILL BE AVAILABLE IN HARD COPY ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1ST AT EACH OF THE CHURCHES BUT WILL BE EMAILED OUT PRIOR TO THAT AND POSTED ON OUR WEBSITE. THANK YOU!

PLEASE NOTE:

- 1) **An Online Zoom Service is not available this Sunday.**
- 2) Our Sunday Sermons are on the website at upperstcroixparish.org under Sermons!
- 3) Sunday's video may be uploaded late on Sundays!
<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: 14th Sunday After Pentecost. "Blessing service"
God Bless you all!

Worship Service Schedule

- 8/25: 10:30 am Joint Service at Atlas Park
Fellowship meal following service.
- 8/27: 4:00 pm Pastor Jenny's One on One Meeting with DS Rev. Peace Kim at Spooner UMC
- 8/29 4:30 pm Youth Band
6:30-7:30pm Senior Youth Gathering

**MARK YOUR
CALENDAR**

Upcoming Events & News

- 8/22-25 **Burnett County Fair (G)**
- 8/24 **Pie & Ice Cream Social (G)**
- 9/5-9/6 **Participatory Theater Ministry & Diversity Council Meeting at Pine Lake Camp**
- 9/8 **Rally Sunday (A)**

Next Sunday (September 1st):

VOLUNTEERS

Central -Grantsburg

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

Atlas

Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Colleen Adams-Schween
Usher	Sue Olson
Cleaning	Volunteer Needed
Sunday School	Fall 2024 Classes Begin 9/8/24
Communion	Sue Olson

St. Croix Falls

Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Jim Andrews
Usher(s)	Karan Sciacca
Counter	Peter Gionis
Bell Ringer	Jim Sciacca
Flowers	Kathy Gionis
Communion	Kathy & Peter Gionis



This Week's Birthdays

Rachel Tooze 8/27
Landon Smestad 8/30



August 25th, 2024

John 6:56-69

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



“Jesus, The Bread of Eternal Life”

I want to start with something funny that I found online: A mother was preparing pancakes for her sons, Kevin, 5, and Ryan, 3. The boys began to argue over who would get the first pancake. Their mother saw the opportunity for a moral lesson. “If Jesus were sitting here, He would say, ‘Let my brother have the first pancake, I can wait.’” Kevin turned to his younger brother and said, “Ryan, you be Jesus!”

This is not just a story for kids; it applies to us as well. We often pray to grow in faith and become more like Christ. However, when we face moments that require humility, patience, or selflessness, we sometimes forget to act like Jesus. It’s true that living in Christlikeness isn’t easy because Jesus is perfect, and we are not. Nevertheless, we should strive to grow toward Christlikeness.

The Apostle Paul says, “Until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine by people’s trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ” (Ephesians 4:13-15). I cited a long passage, but its message is simple: “If we stop learning about Jesus Christ, our faith will remain childish. Spiritual infants are easily swayed by rumors or false doctrines. Therefore, we must grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ in our everyday lives.”

Today’s scripture continues Jesus’ sermon on the Bread of Life. Some of you may wonder why this theme is repeated over several weeks. The reason for this repetition is that it represents the core message of Jesus: that he is the bread of eternal life, come down from heaven. Jesus emphasizes, “Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me.”

Those who heard this message struggled to understand it. Even his disciples said, “This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?” Jesus responded by asking, “Does this offend you? Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before?”

In last Sunday’s scripture, when Jesus spoke about being “the bread of eternal life,” the Jews complained, asking, “How can he give us his flesh to eat?” In today’s scripture, we see that even his disciples were grumbling, saying, “This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?”

Let’s consider why they found it so hard to understand that Jesus is the bread of life from heaven, while we understand it more easily. Even our children grasp the concept of eating the body and blood of Christ. Last Sunday, during the children’s time at the Grantsburg service, Willow clearly answered, “We eat the body and blood of Christ through bread and grape juice at Communion.” Yes, we accept this without doubt. Or do we? Are you also curious about how Jesus is the bread of eternal life?

Last Sunday, I mentioned that Jesus spoke about himself and his sacrificial death on the

cross: if you believe in him, you shall not perish but have eternal life. The key question is, who is Jesus? Do you know who Jesus is? Yes, we know that Jesus is the Son of God, and we believe in him: “our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day, he rose again; he ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of the Father, and will come again to judge the living and the dead.”

However, those around him knew Jesus as the son of Mary, the brother of James, and a poor carpenter. They focused on his human identity, not on the spiritual reality.

One of the biggest obstacles for non-Christians in believing in Jesus is the belief in his virgin birth. When I was a Teaching Assistant to my advisor, Dr. Richard Perry, a Master of Divinity student once said, “I can believe in every Bible verse except the virgin birth.” I asked him, “Do you believe in God the Creator?” He replied, “Yes, I believe in God the Almighty, the Creator.”

I then asked, “So, do you believe that God made you?” He responded, “Yes, I do believe that God made me, but through my parents.” “Okay,” I continued, “what about Adam and Eve? Do you believe God made Adam and Eve?” He said, “Yes, I believe God made them.” “How did God make them? Did He make them through any human male and female?” At that point, he fell silent for a while.

The point is that we often underestimate God the Almighty. Can’t the God who created heaven and earth create a human being by His Word? The Gospel of John says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through Him all things were made; without Him, nothing was made that has been made” (John 1:1-3).

I am continually amazed by advances in technology and medical science. One of my friends, who had been married for ten years without children, finally conceived through in vitro fertilization after several attempts. My younger brother, who is an AI (Artificial Intelligence) computer scientist, mentioned that we may one day reach a point where all medical procedures are performed by AI. Can you imagine that? If humans can achieve this, can’t God the Almighty do even more?

Returning to today’s scripture, consider what Jesus said to his disciples when they remarked that his teaching was difficult to accept. Jesus asked them, “Does this offend you? Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before?” He was essentially asking, “Would you believe in me if you saw me return to heaven, where I came from?”

Even his disciples struggled to believe that Jesus is God’s only Son, who came from heaven to save all humanity. If you believe the scripture in Genesis 1:1, “In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth,” then you should also believe in Jesus’ virgin birth. God is greater than all human science. The Almighty God entered the world in human flesh to save each of us. That is Jesus Christ. Therefore, whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. Abide in him, and he will abide in you. This is the only way to have eternal life. Blessed are those who believe in Jesus, the bread of eternal life. Thanks be to God! Amen!