

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

INVITATION/PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND  
OFFERINGS

## \*DOXOLOGY

UMH 95

## \*PRAYER OF DEDICATION Unison

Thank you, God, for this opportunity to support the ministry and mission of our congregation. May there be a harvest of righteousness among us, shown in the peaceful handling of disputes, in mutual love and support, and in courageous outreach to people near and far who need the help we can give. Bless each gift and giver. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen!

*We Go Forth to Love God and Serve One Another*\*CLOSING HYMN *Here I Am, Lord* UMH 593 (vs. 1 & 2)

\*BENEDICTION Pastor Jenny Lee

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



# Upper St. Croix Parish United Methodist Church

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

**18th Sunday After Pentecost**

**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 (10:15 AM, Sunday School)  
11:15 AM at St. Croix Falls*

**CONTACT INFORMATION**Pastor Jenny Lee: [jennlee1732@gmail.com](mailto:jennlee1732@gmail.com)Youth Director Shayna Schmid: [snsnyder@gmail.com](mailto:snsnyder@gmail.com)Parish Secretary Colleen Norenberg: [centralumc2016@gmail.com](mailto:centralumc2016@gmail.com)

Parish Office: 715-463-2624 St. Croix Falls Office: 715-483-9494

[www.upperstcroixparish.org](http://www.upperstcroixparish.org)<https://www.facebook.com/UpperStCroixParishUMC>

**Upper St. Croix Parish**  
**Grantsburg: Central, Atlas, St. Croix Falls**  
**September 22nd, 2024**  
**18th Sunday After Pentecost**

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\*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

Draw near to God, and God will draw near to you.

Happy are those who find delight in God’s law.

**God is always nearer than our next breath.**

**We gather to become more aware of that presence.**

Knowledge of God is a delight to the righteous.

They seek to grow in wisdom and understanding.

**There is always more to discover than we know.**

**God is our teacher and helper and judge.**

Put your trust in God as you prepare to serve.

Learn to be peaceable, gentle, and merciful.

**We seek to do good and not harm all our days.**

**We would open our hands to the poor and needy. Amen.**

**\*DEDICATING HYMN** *We Are Called* TFWS 2172 (vs. 1 & 2)

**OPENING PRAYER** Unison

You watch over us, O God, and show us the way to prosper in life, not so much in things as in relationships that contribute to our wholeness and well-being. Thank you for meeting us here and helping us to deal with our selfish ambition, disorder, and conflicts. We submit ourselves and with you, voicing our doubts as well as our faith, our hypocrisy along with all that is deeply genuine. Create in us a space for quiet listening and thoughtful meditation. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen!

CHILDREN’S TIME

UMH 191 (vs. 1)

**Proclamation of God’s Word**

**\*THE GOSPEL LESSON**

**Mark 9:30-37**

30 They went on from there and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know it, 31 for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, “The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again.” 32 But they did not understand what he was saying and were afraid to ask him.

33 Then they came to Capernaum, and when he was in the house he asked them, “What were you arguing about on the way?” 34 But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest. 35 He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, “Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.” 36 Then he took a little child and put it among them, and taking it in his arms he said to them, 37 “Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me.”

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

**Thanks be to God. Amen!**

**SERMON**

*“You are a Chosen People!”*

**Pastor Jenny Lee**

**We Respond to God’s Word**

**RESPONDING PRAYER** Unison

Gracious God, revealed to us as we welcome children in the name of Jesus, grant us childlike openness and honesty to explore your Word. Teach us, as Jesus taught the disciples, that we may aspire not so much to greatness, but to faithfulness, counting service in Christ’s name. We are proud of who we are: a chosen people, a royal priesthood, and your beloved ones. Amen!

**SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS**

*After each prayer request:*

*Pastor: Lord, in your mercy,*

*All: Hear our Prayer.*

# SEPTEMBER CHURCH MISSIONS

## ATLAS

Mission committee chair: Ashleigh Olson

<p><b>INK JET RECYCLING PROGRAM:</b></p> <p>Atlas collects and recycles ink jet cartridges and cell phones year-round.</p> 	<p><b>LOAVES &amp; FISHES NEEDS OUR ONGOING SUPPORT</b></p> <p>Requested items: eggs, milk, mayonnaise, coffee, tea, peanut butter, crackers, cookies. Personal Products for men &amp; women.</p>	<p>We will be collecting financial donations for Moolah for Milk and supplies for DIF, an agency in Mexico which is responsible for child welfare.</p> 
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## GRANTSBURG

Mission committee chair: Deb Hammer

<p><b>BE A "BACK-PACK BACKER"!</b></p> <p>REMEMBER ... Every Sunday Is MAC 'N CHEESE SUNDAY! Supporting the Salvation Army's "Happy Kids Back-Pack Program"</p> 	<p>We will collect financial donations to support the Burnett County Salvation Army's Backpack Program.</p> 
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## ST. CROIX FALLS

Mission committee chair: Kate Murtaugh

 <p><b>Food Shelf</b> (Communion Sunday)</p>	<p><b>Sailor Hat Offering:</b></p> <p><i>The Sailor Hat offering will go to support SCF School Backpack Program</i></p> 
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Thank you for your support!

# TODAY'S SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

**Ministers** All God's People  
Rev. Jenny Lee

## VOLUNTEERS: Central -Grantsburg

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



## Atlas

Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Colleen Adams-Schween
Usher	Cheryl Olson
Cleaning	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>
Sunday School	Josie Grimes

## St. Croix Falls

Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Jim Andrews
Usher(s)	Karan Sciacca
Counter	Peter Gionis
Bell Ringer	Jim 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 and justice for all over the world!



## PLEASE NOTE:

- 1) **An Online Zoom Service is scheduled for this Sunday only at 9:00 am.**
- 2) 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=SDZleFNubmEvaDBlcytTRzVxMFliZz09>  
Phone: +1 312 626 6799,  
Meeting ID: 841 4780 8460, Passcode: 568271
- 3) Our Sunday Sermons are on the website at [upperstcroixparish.org](http://upperstcroixparish.org) under Sermons!
- 4) Sunday's video may be uploaded on late Sundays!  
<https://www.facebook.com/UpperStCroixParishUMC>
- 5) 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: 18th Sunday After Pentecost. *God Bless you all!*

### Worship Service Schedule

9/15:	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
9/23:	10:30 am- 1:30pm	Harmony Choir Rehearsal at Rice Lake
9/24:	6:30 pm	Ad Council Meeting (G)
9/25:	9:00 am-11:00 pm	Loaves & Fishes' Volunteers Gathering at Lutheran Church in Luck
	4:00-5:00 pm	Diversity Council Meeting via Zoom
9/26:	5:00 pm	Youth Band
	6:30 pm-8:00 pm	Senior Youth Bible Study (G)

### Upcoming Events & News

10/2 & 10/16:	K5-Up Kids Gathering (G)-Go Fish Kids' Gatherings are restarting every other Wednesday!
10/6:	World Communion Sunday: Collecting diverse breads. Please take a look at the signup sheet! UMCOR Special Offering collected.
10/20:	Laity Sunday

Next Sunday (September 29th):

## VOLUNTEERS

### Central -Grantsburg

Pianist	Toni Koons
Liturgist	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>
Acolyte(s)	Willow Nyland
Fellowship	Sharon Huff
Counter	Dave Huff
Cleaning	Sandra Erickson
Mowing	Dave Huff
Sunday School	Jenni Stedmen



### Atlas

Pianist	Toni Koons
Liturgist	Mariah Gaffey
Usher	Colleen Adams-Schween
Cleaning	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>
Sunday School	Cheryl Olson

### St. Croix Falls

Pianist	Toni Koons
Liturgist	Jim Andrews
Usher(s)	Karan Sciacca
Counter	Peter Gionis
Bell Ringer	Jim Sciacca
Flowers	Kathy Gionis

## This Week's Birthdays & Anniversaries



Anneliese Snyder 9/22

Kristie Olson 9/28

September 22nd, 2024

Mark 9:30-37

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



### **“You are a Chosen People”**

I want to start with something funny that I found online: An elderly woman walked into the local country church. The friendly usher greeted her at the door and helped her up the flight of steps. “Where would you like to sit?” he asked politely. “The front row, please,” she answered. “You really don’t want to do that,” the usher said. “The pastor is really boring.” “Do you happen to know who I am?” the woman asked. “No,” he replied. “I’m the pastor’s mother,” she said indignantly. “Do you know who I am?” he asked. “No,” she said. “Good,” he answered.

What is your greatest passion in life? Perhaps it’s watching your grandchildren grow, spending time with your pets, being actively involved in a community club, gardening, working out for your health, or simply spending time with your family. Whatever your passion is, we all strive for well-being and a joyful life.

The reason you enjoy watching your grandchildren grow is that it brings you joy in that moment. The reason you actively participate in a social club is that it makes you feel valued. The reason you love gardening is that it inspires you. There are reasons behind the things we are passionate about.

Even though our hobbies and passions have reasons, doesn’t our life itself have a special purpose? Sometimes we wonder if we are valuable, if we are useful, or if we are loved by someone. Perhaps we all long to be great, cherished, and beloved by others.

Remember, each of us is a very important being in the Kingdom of God. The purpose God created each of us for is that we are vital parts of His Kingdom.

A few months ago, I received a gift from one of our parishioners. It was a puzzle called “Jesus and Sheep.” I don’t usually do puzzles because I feel like they take up too much time, but I enjoyed this one. It took me about a week to complete. However, I couldn’t finish it because one piece was missing. The missing piece wasn’t of Jesus or the sheep, but just a small edge near Jesus’ right elbow. Still, even that piece of background was essential to completing the puzzle. Without it, the puzzle remained incomplete.

In the same way, each of us is an equally precious part of our church ministry and, more importantly, the Kingdom of God. Nothing can replace you.

Most people want to be the greatest part of their family, the community, and anything they put effort into. Otherwise, they feel they are not an important part. In today’s scripture, we see an argument of the disciples and Jesus’ teaching regarding it. Through this story, we may get insight.

As we learned last Sunday, Jesus began to teach about his important mission project after Peter’s confession, “You are the Messiah.” It is the second time Jesus taught his disciples about his mission, saying, “The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again.” The disciples couldn’t understand what Jesus was talking about, but no one asked him. Rather, they were afraid to ask. They couldn’t imagine Jesus would suffer and die because they saw the many miracles Jesus performed. They might have thought about why Jesus would die and who would dare go against him because Jesus was the

person who raised the dead, scolded the storm, healed the blind and the deaf, drove out the evil spirits, and fed five thousand people with five loaves of bread and two fish. They were also afraid to ask him because they saw that Jesus had scolded Peter. When Peter said, “No way, you shouldn’t die,” Jesus said, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things” (Mark 8:33).

Instead, they imagined a world where Jesus would become king and argued about who would be the greatest among them. Can you imagine? Jesus was preparing to suffer and die, yet His disciples were concerned about who would hold the highest position. Despite being taught by Jesus for three years, they still had a different vision from His. They remained focused on themselves, as Jesus said, “For you are setting your mind not on divine things, but on human things.”

Nevertheless, Jesus was patient with them and taught about humility, saying, “Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.” Then, “Jesus took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them, ‘Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me’” (Mark 9:36-37).

As you may know, there were three vulnerable groups in Israelite society: women, children, and strangers. They had no voice in public decisions or opinions. Jesus used a child as an example to teach about humility and hospitality. A child represented the weak and powerless—socially, economically, and politically. By serving a child—or anyone who is weak or powerless—with humility, you are serving Jesus. And furthermore, you are serving God. Consider who the weak and powerless are today. Who needs our help?

The disciples focused on Jesus’ miracles and enjoyed the fame that came from being associated with His miraculous works. They took pride in being His followers, dreaming of gaining higher positions. But we shouldn’t follow that path. Christians are not called to privilege or power, but to serve others, as Jesus did.

We sometimes fail to remain steadfast in our faith. We may wander, seeking worldly things. We might doubt the truth of biblical stories, lacking faith. We might complain or blame God when we face life’s challenges—a bad medical report, a broken relationship with a loved one. Some of us may turn to alcohol or drugs when we feel weak, lonely, or depressed, questioning our worth. But remember, you are chosen by God and beloved.

Some of you may know that I enjoy knitting prayer shawls. While knitting, if I drop a stitch, I can’t complete the shawl. If I continue without fixing the mistake, the entire shawl is ruined. I have to go back, find the dropped stitch, and start again. In knitting, every stitch is equally important to complete the whole shawl. In the same way, each of us is a precious part of the Kingdom of God. No one is more precious than another; all are equally valuable in the unity of the body of Christ.

I’d like to conclude with 1 Peter 2:9: “You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.”

There are three parts to our life journey: moments of darkness, moments of encountering the wonderful light, and moments of shining that light. Where are you now? Are you in darkness? Listen to God’s voice calling you out of it. Are you standing in the light? Rejoice in your life, knowing you belong to God. If the light hasn’t come yet, trust in God’s love, which will guide you to that moment of light and enable you to shine it forth. Trust in God—you are chosen by Him!

Thanks be to God. Amen!