

THE LORD'S PRAYER

INVITATION/PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

*DOXOLOGY

UMH 95

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION Unison

We dedicate this offering and all our resources to drying tears and sharing good news of peace. Make us instruments of healing and channels of forgiveness, so all your children may realize opportunities for new life. We rejoice in the promise of salvation that we are privileged to share. Amen!

We Go Forth to Love God and Serve One Another

*CLOSING HYMN *In the Garden* UMH 314 (vs. 1 & 2)

*BENEDICTION Rev. Jenny Lee

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

NO. 2025-16
April 20th, 2025

Upper St. Croix Parish United Methodist Church

The 2025 Parish Ministry Theme:
“Do Good and Share with Others” (Hebrews 13:16)

Church Love Month Easter Sunday



Grantsburg-Central
Since 1897



Atlas
Since 1887



St. Croix Falls
Since 1859

SUNDAY SERVICES:

9:00 AM at Grantsburg with Online Zoom Service
(9:10 AM, Children's Time)
10:00 AM at Atlas (10:15 AM, Sunday School)
11:15 AM at St. Croix Falls

CONTACT INFORMATION

Rev. 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 20th, 2025
Church Love Month
Easter Sunday

*Please stand if you are able.

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

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASSING OF THE GREETINGS

“Happy Easter!”

(Waive your hands at one another)

We Celebrate New Life in Christ

***CALL TO WORSHIP Responsive**

Rejoice and be glad in God’s new creation.

As in Adam all die, so in Christ all shall live.

**Sounds of weeping are changed to joy
and cries of distress are turned to gladness.**

God has anointed Jesus of Nazareth
with the Holy Spirit and with power.

**God has raised Jesus from the dead,
the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.**

We are witnesses to all Jesus said and did,
as we share the good news of Easter.

**God is our Strength and our Song,
and has become our Salvation. Amen.**

***DEDICATING HYMN** *Thine Be the Glory* **UMH 302 (vs. 1 & 2)**

OPENING PRAYER Unison

**O God of pleasant vineyards and fulfilling days, come among us to
establish your day of peace. May this place be as your holy
mountain, where none shall hurt or destroy. Raise us up with
Christ to share in your realm, where even death is destroyed. Your
work, O God, is marvelous in our eyes. Live mightily in our hearts.
Amen!**

New Member Recognition (G)

John Little (*Gabriel and Shannon Little*)

2025 Lenten Bible Study Recognition (A & SCF)

Bob Determan (A), Wendell Hauble (A)

Jim Andrews (SCF), Sharon Asp (SCF), Lynn Hanson (SCF), Kathy
Gionis (SCF), Sara Koser (SCF), Mike Koser (SCF), Jim Sciacca (SCF),
and Karen Sciacca (SCF)

CHILDREN’S TIME

UMH 191 (vs. 1)

Proclamation of God’s Word

***THE GOSPEL LESSON**

John 20:1-18

(NRSV, p. 114 in the NT, and p.921 in the Living Bible)

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

Thanks be to God. Amen!

SERMON “God, My Father and Your Father” Rev. Jenny Lee

We Respond to God’s Word

RESPONDING PRAYER Unison

**Risen Lord Jesus, thank You for calling us by name and drawing us
into the embrace of Your Father—our Father. On this Easter
morning, we rejoice in the hope of the empty tomb and the promise
that we are not alone. You meet us in our grief, our shame, and our
brokenness, and You speak life. Because of You, we are children of
God, loved, known, and never abandoned. Help us live boldly in this
truth, and may Your resurrection power transform every corner of
our lives. We give You all the glory, our Savior and Brother. 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!

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:
eggs, milk,
mayonnaise, coffee,
tea, peanut butter,
crackers, cookies.
Personal
Products for men &
women.

We will be collecting
supplies for the
church in April.
Thank you for your
support!



Suggested/Needed Items:
-Styrofoam coffee cups 8 1/2oz (no large ones)
-Plastic drink cups 9oz
-Small luncheon paper plates
-Gallon plastic bags with twist ties
-Furnace filters 20x16 (lasting 3 months or longer)

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 for the
church in April.



Supply Needs: Please
check the Mission Board and the April
newsletter for a detailed list of items
needed. Thank you for your ongoing
support of our monthly missions.

ST. CROIX FALLS

Mission committee chair: Kate Murtaugh

Food Shelf

(Communion
Sunday)



Sailor Hat Offering:

The Sailor Hat offering will go
to support the local
community with
SCF Police
vouchers for
homeless lodging.



Thank you for your support!

TODAY'S SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

Ministers All God's People / Rev. Jenny Lee

Central -Grantsburg

Pianist	Toni Koons
Scripture Reading	Toni Koons
Acolyte(s)	Willow Nyland
Fellowship	Ad Council Members
Counter	Volunteer Needed
Cleaning	Sandra Erickson
Sunday School	Volunteer Needed



Thank You
Volunteers

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)	Lynn Hanson
Counter	Peter Gionis
Bell Ringer	Jim Sciacca
Flowers	Kathy Gionis
Fellowship	Admin Members

THIS WEEK'S BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Sean Ludnia 4/20
Doug Kunze 4/21
Julie Branstad 4/24
Jim & Barbara Loomis 4/25
Dustin Kunze 4/26



PLEASE NOTE:

- 1) **An Online Zoom Service is scheduled for this Sunday only at 9:00 am.**
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=SDZleFNubmEvaDBlcytTRzVxMFIIZz09>
Phone: +1 312 626 6799,
Meeting ID: 841 4780 8460, Passcode: 568271
- 3) Our Sunday Sermons are on the website at 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: Easter Sunday. Happy Easter!

Worship Service Schedule

4/13:	9:00 am	Grantsburg with Zoom (9:10 am, Children's Time)
	10:00 am	Atlas (10:15 am, Sunday School)
	11:15 am	St. Croix Falls
4/22-5/5:		Pastor Jenny on Vacation
4/23:	5:30 -7:30 pm	Youth Activity (G)
4/25	5:30-7:30 pm	Family Game Night (G)
4/26	9:00 am – 3:00 pm	Spring Sale and Luncheon (G)

Upcoming Events & News

*April: Church Love Month

- 4/22-5/5: Pastor Jenny's Vacation
- 5/2-5/4: Youth Retreat at Wood Lake Camp (questions to Youth Director Shayna Schmid)
- 5/4: Pulpit Supplies: Sharon Asp (All three churches)
- 5/5-5/6: Provisional Elder Workshop at Pine Lake Camp
- 5/11: Communion/Mother's Day



Next Sunday (April 27th):

Central -Grantsburg

Pianist	Toni Koons
Preach	Barbara Loomis
Scripture Reading	Toni Koons
Acolyte(s)	Willow Nyland
Fellowship	Volunteer Needed
Counter	Volunteer Needed
Cleaning	Sandra Erickson
Sunday School	Volunteer Needed



Atlas

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

St. Croix Falls

Pianist	Sharon Asp
Preach	Kathy Gionis
Liturgist	Karen Sciacca
Usher(s)	Lynn Hanson
Counter	Peter Gionis
Bell Ringer	Jim Sciacca
Flowers	Kathy Gionis
Fellowship	Admin Members



Breakthrough Prayers: Please pray for: Dauntay Erickson (recovery), Ken Olson (recovery), Ron Aldorfer (healing & strength), Sally Aldorfer (self-care), Lynn Hanson (healing), Sanci and Rifle Harshman (healing), Jameson Koser (healing), Jim Loomis (healing), LeAnn Sylvester (healing), those struggling with illness and/or addiction, especially children, undocumented immigrants, for the U.S.A, for Myanmar (earthquake) and the world (God's peace).

Praise the Lord in gratitude and joy: Georgeanne Koons (recovery), Rifle Harshman (God works), Kathy Gionis (Family union)

"This kind can come out only by prayer." (Mark 9:29)



“God, My Father and Your Father”

I want to start with something funny. I heard a story about three Catholic ladies who were boasting about their sons: One said, “My son is a priest. When he walks into a room, people say, ‘Father.’” The second said, “My son is a bishop. When he enters, people say, ‘Your Grace.’” The third said, “My son is a broadcaster, six foot three, incredibly good-looking, and always dressed to impress. When he walks into a room, all the ladies say, ‘Oh my God!’”

We all have something we like to boast about. Maybe it’s your children, your education, your home or accomplishments. But the Apostle Paul says in Galatians 6:14, “May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.” If we boast in anything, let it be in the Lord. I proudly boast that I can call God “my Father” because of Jesus Christ—who came into the world, died on the cross, rose again, and will come again for you and for me. Apart from this very truth, I don’t think we have anything else worth boasting about.

Today, I want to talk about how wonderful it is that we can call God *Abba*—my Father and your Father. Do you know why people were so upset with Jesus that they sent Him to be killed? It was because Jesus said, “God is my Father.” That alone was considered blasphemy. The Jewish leaders believed it was a sin even to speak God’s name, much less claim such intimacy.

But Jesus called God “my Father”—and for that, they condemned Him. They didn’t understand what we now know: “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16) This is the truth we believe—but non-Christians do not. We can call God our Father because of Jesus. They cannot, because they do not believe. Later on, the Apostle Paul picks up this language in Romans 8:15 and Galatians 4:6, saying that through the Holy Spirit, we also can cry out, “Abba, Father” — meaning we’re not just followers or servants, but beloved children of God. Therefore, we can boast in this: God—my Father and your Father—is the Creator of all things, the very Author of life and death.

It’s Easter morning, and I’m so grateful to see you at church today. Every morning, I thank God for the gift of a new day, a new beginning. In a way, we practice death and resurrection every day. Don’t you think? We sleep at night—like a little death—and rise again in the morning. And throughout our lives, we face moments that feel like death: when we lose someone we love; when we hear terrible news from a doctor; when we witness suffering in our world; and when life feels out of our control. But even in those moments, do not forget: There is God—my Father and your Father—and Jesus Christ, our Savior.

There was a woman once, controlled by seven evil spirits. She was an outcast—ignored, shamed, hopeless. But then, she met Jesus, and He healed her. He became her last hope. And then... He died. Her name was Mary Magdalene. Early in the morning, while it was still dark, she came to the tomb. Grief has a way of casting shadows over everything. The world outside was dark, but Mary’s heart was darker still. Her Teacher, her Healer, her Lord—was gone. Even the other disciples had gone home after finding the tomb empty. But Mary stayed. She stood outside the tomb, weeping. She couldn’t give up on finding Jesus. Then she turned and saw a man she thought was the gardener. But when He spoke her name—“Mary”—everything changed.

What a moment. The risen Jesus met her in a garden and simply said her name. It was intimate. Tender. Personal. This is our God. This is Jesus—who steps into our gardens of grief and confusion and calls us by

name. And then He says something beautiful to Mary: “Go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’”

Did you catch that? My Father and your Father. This is the first time in John’s Gospel Jesus speaks like this. Before the resurrection, He would say “the Father” or “my Father.” But now—because of Easter—He includes us. Because of the cross and the empty tomb, we are brought into the family of God. We are no longer outsiders or servants. We are sons and daughters.

We can call the Creator of the universe... “Father.” If you are suffering today—don’t give up. God may be working even now.

I want to share a bit of my own story. I had a difficult childhood. I grew up in a patriarchal Confucian household. I witnessed my mother suffer deeply. When she gave birth to me, a baby girl, my grandfather didn’t allow the room to be heated, even in the cold of winter. We endured that bitter cold. As I grew up, I was forbidden to sing or paint. When I reached high school age, they told me I couldn’t go—because I was a girl. There was tension, arguing, and brokenness in our home. My parents eventually left my grandparents’ house so their children could have a better life. We were poor—living in one small room, all seven of us. My father, once raised in wealth, struggled with poverty and became an alcoholic. We lived in shame—for our poverty, and for our drunken father. People in town called us “the drinker’s children.”

One day, a neighbor invited my mother to a prayer house on a mountaintop to seek healing and reconciliation. She fasted and prayed there for three days. In that time, she remembered that she had once been baptized as a child by an American missionary. She repented and promised to lead our family to God. She was healed, and we began attending church. But this upset my grandfather, and my father struggled even more—caught between his parents and his wife. The more we tried to bring him to church, the more he drank. But we kept praying. Every morning, we lifted him up to God. His drinking began to lessen. And finally, on Easter morning in 1993, my father was baptized. It was as if our whole family was born again. We wept with gratitude and joy. My father even convinced my grandfather to remove the Confucian temple and change our family’s traditional customs. Not long after, even my grandparents became Christians.

So I tell you: Hope is not far away. As long as you do not give up, God hears your prayers. He can transform what seems unchangeable.

What does Easter mean to you? It means... you have hope. You are not alone. You are not abandoned. You have a Father. A perfect Father. A faithful Father. A Father who runs to meet you—like in the story of the prodigal son. A Father who knows your name—just as Jesus knew Mary’s.

Maybe this Easter morning you’ve come to church with darkness still hanging over your life—grief, uncertainty, regret. But Jesus meets you in the garden. He calls you by name.

And He says: “My Father is your Father. My God is your God.”

So today, we rejoice—not just because the tomb is empty—but because our hearts are full.

Christ is risen! And because He lives, we live as beloved sons and daughters of the Father.

Thanks be to God. Amen.